A history of the settlement of liberated Africans in the colony of Sierra Leone during the first half of the 19th century.

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C O N T E N T S

T H E E N D

I

AN EVALUATION OF THE SOURCES OF MATERIAL

The Principal sources from which one can obtain useful material for any thesis on A History of the Liberated Africans are (i) the Records of the Liberated African Department; (ii) the Secretary of State's Despatches - both of which are found in the Sierra Leone Government Archives at Fourah Bay College; (iii) the C. M. S. Record Books, found at the Fourah Bay College Library; (iv) and a few books on Sierra Leone's history, also found at the Fourah Bay College Library.

Nevertheless these principle sources are by no means, in themselves alone, adequate for the basis of a dissertation on the History of the Liberated African Settlements in the Colony of Sierra Leone during the first half of the 19th Century. Consequently I have subsidised the main sources with all written accounts of the Liberated Africans that have fallen into my hands. In this category of subsidiary material, I have found invaluable articles from Journals and Magazines like: "Journal of African History," "Africa," and "Sierra Leone Studies" New Series. There are also available at Fourah Bay College Library, Microfilms of the Sierra Leone Weekly News of the late 19th Century.

Although written records are by far the most authentic sources of historical material, yet the historian cannot completely ignore Oral Tradition or "Hear Say." In fact, in the absence of documentary material, Oral Tradition is the second best source. I have therefore included "Hear Say" in my list of subsidiary source-material.

I shall now attempt an assessment of these various sources from which I have obtained material for the dissertation.

The Liberated African Department Records, by far the most valuable source for material, are robbed of their full worth by many defects. For example, the Registers of Liberated Africans are not completely filled in. In each Register there are columns for the headings: Name of Liberated African, Description, Adult - Male/Female, stature, Child, Tribe, Vessel, Nationality, Date of Emancipation, Disposal. But hardly ever were all these columns filled in. The omission of Names of Liberated Africans and their description were common in the Liberated African Records. Point of fact, not even one out of some 20 Registers was properly kept. After Liberated African No. 822, who was captured on board the Esperanza, there was no more any indication, in the Registers, of where the Re-Captives came from, or of when they were emancipated.

The Registers, also called for a record of the manner of disposal of each individual Liberated African: but only about eight hundred entries of disposal were made by the Registrars of Liberated Africans. The incomplete nature of the entries in the Liberated African Registers makes it difficult for anyone to attempt a successful classification of the Re-Captives according to their tribes.

The Letter Books, ten in number, and embracing the period of study[1] and seven Miscellaneous Return Books[2] are also invaluable documents for a thesis on the settlements of the Liberated Africans. The Letter Books contain many letters on various subjects appertaining to one or other of the Liberated African Settlements, from the Liberated African Department in Freetown to the Managers of the Villages; or written by the Managers to the Superintendent of Liberated Africans. As these letters are assorted in content, pieces of valuable information can be obtained from a reading of them.

The Miscellaneous Return Books are similar to the Letter Books in content, with the only exception that the Miscellaneous Returns contain other enteries like Agricultural Returns of the villages or Districts, Educational Returns and Store Accounts. In fact the Miscellaneous Return Books are a collection of various letters and reports dealing with some aspect of the Management and supervision of the Liberated Africans.

1 1820-1862

2 1826-1838

Some 53 volumes of letters in manuscript form the despatches of the Secretary of State to the Governors and Officers Administering the Government of Sierra Leone between 1808 and 1860. As many of these letters dealt with some aspect of the management of the Liberated Africans, one can fairly closely trace the line of Government policy towards the administration of the Recaptives. Reports of, and observations, on, the progress of the Liberated African Settlements are also found in these despatches. Also available at the Archives are the despatches from the Governors to the Secretary of State, many of which deal with aspects of Liberated African Administration. The Secretary of State's Despatches and the letters from the Governors form a useful complement, one to the other, in a study of the Liberated African Settlements.

The records of the Church Missionary Society for the period 1804 to the 1860's, contained in the Proceedings of The Church Missionary Society and The Church Missionary Record, provide annual reports of the progress of the C. M. S. in West Africa. In the early years 1804-1816 the C. M. S. concentrated their attention on the evangelization of the Susus in the Rio Pongas.

When this proved fruitless by 1816, the C. M. S. undertook the task of converting the Liberated Africans, who since November 1808 were being landed in Sierra Leone in large numbers. As the Sierra Leone Government was short of personell, the supervision and management of these Re-Captives also fell on the Church Missionary Society's Officers. Thus the C. M. S. shouldered a dual responsibility in superintending and evangelizing the Liberated Africans. The C. M. S. Records for the Period 1804 to the 1860's supply valuable information on the development of the Liberated African Settlements in the Colony of Sierra Leone.

Much valuable information on the Liberated Africans can be obtained from the Demographer - R.R. Kuczynski. In his book "A Demographic Survey of the British Colonial Empire- First Part", Kuczynski deals exhaustively with the process of adjudication of the captured slaves, the mortality among the Liberated Africans, the disposal of landed Liberated Africans, Emigration and re-enslavement as two main causes of reduction in the numbers of the Liberated Africans. But Kuczynski is silent about the progress of the settled Liberated Africans in their villages.

J. J. Crook's, "A History of the Colony of Sierra Leone" touches certain aspects of the Liberated Africans, like the method of recruiting Liberated Africans into the Forces and the different methods adopted by successive governors in the location and management of the Liberated Africans.

F. Harrison Rankin gives a good portrait of life in the Colony of Sierra Leone in the middle of the 1830's in his two volumes entitled "The White man's Grave". Among other things, Rankin describes the process of Slave Liberation, the apprenticeship system, and the Liberated African Villages. Rankin also portrays the feeling of jealousy harboured by the settlers against the Liberated Africans who were rising in social position. This portrayal of life in the Colony of Sierra Leone in the middle of the 1830's is very much similar to that of F.A.J.Utting in his book "The Story of Sierra Leone".

In "A Residence at Sierra Leone by Mrs. M.L. Melville, a few chapters are devoted to the arrival of the Liberated Africans and the turn of fortune of the early Colonists, and an attempt at classifying the Liberated Africans into their various tribal groups. Mrs. Melville unwittingly criticizes the Liberated Africans as being fonder of embarking on trade than of persevering at any sort of manual labour. It is true that many Liberated Africans were traders, but a good deal of them also took to agriculture, where that was possible; and many were craftsmen - Masons, Mechanics and Timber Workers.

Peter Leonard in his book "Records of a Voyage to the Western Coast of Africa" goes all out to show that the Slave Trade was prevalent in the Colony of Sierra Leone in the 1830's.

He gives many instances in which Liberated Africans were kidnapped and resold into slavery.

"West African Sketches" by Sir. G. R. Collier and Sir Charles MacCarthy gives a comparison of the Settlers and the Liberated Africans, describes the settlement of the Liberated Africans about Governor MacCarthy's time with emphasis on the Industry of the Liberated Africans.

Thomas Fowell Buxton's essay on "The African Slave Trade" exhaustively deals with mortality in connection with the Slave Trade. Buxton buttresses his case with ample statistics.

"The First Generation of Sierra Leoneans" and "Sierra Leone in History and Tradition " - both by Captain F. W. Butt-Thompson, contain accounts of the Liberated Africans. In The First Generation of Sierra Leoneans we are given portraits of some outstanding Liberated Africans who rose to be prominent Merchants, Lawyers, Doctors, Educationists and Ministers. In "Sierra Leone in History and Tradition" Butt-Thompson describes the slave courts - the Vice Admiralty and Mixed Commissions Courts, the Royal African Corps, the King's Yard and the Liberated African Department staff, and the rise of the Liberated Africans through co-operation and industry. Butt-Thompson is however unrealiable on many points for he blends in his History a lot of legends which he accepts as facts.

Rev. E. G. Ingham's "Sierra Leone after a Hundred Years" outlines the progress made by the Liberated Africans in their villages the co-operative spirit of the Liberated Africans, the influence of education on the Negro and the handicaps that faced the C. M. S. in their work among the Recaptives. Rev. Ingham, like Mr. Haensel, the principal of the Christian Institution in 1831, was convinced that education, instead of widening the mental out-look of the African, tended to make him proud and disdainful of manual work. Ingham, however, poorly draws his material from Clerkson's Diary.

In "The Hand Book of Sierra Leone" T. N. Goddard among other things writes about the trade of the Colony between 1817 and 1824 and Lieutenant Colonel Denham's work among the Liberated Africans.

T. S. Johnson in his "The Story of a Mission" devotes a chapter on the rise of the Colony villages and their subsequent history. This is in the main an outline of the growth of Christianity in the Colony villages during the early part of the 19th century.

"Memoirs of a Slave Trader" by Theodore Canot, a notorious slave dealer in the Sherbro - Gallinas area during the 1830's gives a detailed record of a typical slaving expedition of the period. Canot describes the method of loading slaves on board, the daily routine on board slavers, the observance of personal hygiene on board and the sale of

condemned slave vessels at Freetown. Canot criticized the practice of selling condemned slave vessels on the grounds that the purchasers of such condemned vessels were themselves either slave dealers or their agents.

J. Holman, R.N. devotes a chapter of his book "Holman's Voyages Round the World" to a description of the flourishing Liberated African Community at Kissy in 1827. Then Kissy was not only the medical centre of the Colony but also produced a great part of the grains and vegetables of the Colony market.

Sketchy accounts of the Creoles, the descendants of the Liberated Africans are found in the following books:- "A Bibliography of Sierra Leone" by Harry Charles Luke; and "Sierra Leone" by Roy Lewis. In the chapter headed "Creoledom" Roy Lewis attempts an evaluation of Creole-leadership in the History of Sierra Leone. While paying tribute to the Creoles' achievement of "Education and a higher standard of living", Roy Lewis denounces Creole bigotry and their tendency to discriminate against the Natives. To a large extent Harry Charles Luke is of the same opinion of the Creoles.

Pieces of valuable information about the Liberated Africans have also been gathered from articles in various Journals and Magazines like Sierra Leone Studies - New Series, Africa, and the Journal of African History. For example, in No. 12 of the New Series of Sierra Leone Studies,

A. N. H. Pearsal has written a detailed account of the part played by British War ships in enforcing the abolition of the Slave Trade between 1808 and 1869, in an article entitled "Sierra Leone and the suppression of the Slave Trade."

To enhance my source of material I have also included Oral Tradition and "Hear-say". In this regard I have had to rely on accounts given by old and reputable Sierra Leoneans, of life in their respective villages during their childhood. One such fascinating account was given by an old Creole man from Waterloo who told me that one day when he was just nine years old, his father took him to the Bank - then situated, or rather housed in the building now used as the Employment Exchange Office in Freetown, at the corner of Westmoreland and Walpole Streets - to open a savings account with three Coppers for him. Such an account reveals two things. First it shows that the cost of living in the late 19th century in Freetown was low; and it also reveals the thrifty habits of the Liberated Africans.

In addition to these sources of material, I have also consulted a number of other books on Sierra Leone's history touching on aspects of the Liberated Africans. A complete list of such books will be found in the bibliography attached to this work.

These, therefore, have been the sources from which I have collected material for my dissertation on the topic "A History of the Liberated African Settlements in the Colony of Sierra Leone During the first half of the 19th century." But as the responsibility of admininteringand supervising the Liberated African Settlements was the duty of a special Government Department, The Liberated African Department, an examination of the function and composition of that Department will throw much light on the history of the Liberated Africans. Unfortunately, however, although many accounts have been written about the Liberated Africans, yet in none of these many accounts have the workings of the Liberated African Department been probed into. In this dissertation I shall examine the composition and function of the Liberated African Department with the aim of finding how effieient it was in the execution of its manifold duties. I shall also try to prove that the Liberated Africans, on the whole were industrious, and not averse to habits of industry as has been alleged by some authors. Many writers are in agreement on the fact that recruitment of Liberated Africans in the Forces was a difficult problem but none has examined the root cause of the disinclination of the Recaptives to enrollment in H.M.Forces. It is also well known that Liberated Africans did not like to emigrate to the West Indies, but not much reason has been given for their dislike to do so. These and other questions I shall endeavour to explain in this Thesis.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

FREETOWN BEFORE 1808

Any aspect of the History of the Liberated Africans in the Colony of Sierra Leone which ignores the record of the vicissitudes through which the settlement had past from 1787 to 1808, would be missing a vital historical connecting link. Consequently in this dissertation on "A History of the Liberated African settlements in the Colony of Sierra Leone during the first half of the 19th century," I deem it proper, as part of the introduction, to outline the growth of Freetown from 1787 to the year when the first cargo of Liberated Africans was landed in Sierra Leone. This, I hope, will not only provide a useful background, but will also assist in estimating the comparative rates of development of the Sierra Leone settlement before and after the advent of the Liberated Africans.

The natural beginning of the history of the Liberated African settlements in the Colony of Sierra Leone should be the pronouncement of the Murray Mansfield verdict of 1772. By the act of 1772, not only were Jonathan Strong and James Somerset set free, but also thousands of other slaves who were then residing in England by 1772 or, who later on went to England, won their freedom. For Lord Chief-Justice

Murray Mansfield declared, inter alia, that the Laws of England did not permit slavery, so if any slave set foot on English soil he became a free man. England, after 1772, therefore became the asylum of streams of runner-way slaves.

The winning of the "Slaves Charter," as the 1772 decision has been sometimes called, was only the beginning of the work of the Abolitionists. Now that thousands of negroes, in needy circumstances, infested the streets of England where even the climate was injurious to them, it became necessary to provide and take care of this Afflicted class. So the Abolitionists formed an organization called the "Black Poor Society" for the relief of the sufferings of these indigent negroes. Fortunately, a plan for a settlement, suitable for Blacks, drawn by Dr. Henry Smeathman, in 1786, fell into the hands of the Black Poor Society. The area selected by Dr. Smeathman was within the neighbourhood of the Sierra Leone Peninsula, of which Dr. Smeathman had this to say.

> "All the colony wanted is what decency requires; and the earth turned up of 2 or 3 inches, with a slight hoe, produces any kind of grain."

Moreover, the Natives of this area were described as "Friendly disposed."[1]

1 Wadstrom

Dr. Smeathman's plan was accepted. A company was founded consisting of the members of the Black Poor Committee to take care of the enterprise; and so the way was prepared for the settling in Sierra Leone in 1787 of the first batch of freed slaves, numbering about 377. The new settlement was named "Graville Town" in honour of Granville Sharp one of the leading members of the Black Poor Society.

Right from the start dark clouds hung over the settlement. The colonists arrived in their new tropical home just a few weeks to the beginning of the rainy season. They had scarcely completed building huts for themselves when the rains set in and then it was too late to sow crops for their own comsumption. Consequently the colonists had to rely on the goodwill of the natives, who were not always friendly, even for procuring food. Moreover, death and desertation took their tolls, in diminishing the numbers of this first band of settlers. To off set this threatened disintegration of the settlement, Granville Sharp sent a relief expedition in August 1788 consisting of 39 new colonists, with some arms and tools and provisions. Inspite of this relief expedition, the hostility of the Temne chiefs who attacked and destroyed Granville Town, compelled the colonists to disperse finally. Once again Granville Sharp was at the rescue. He sent Falcumbridge in January 1791 to collect the dispersed colonists. Falcumbridge succeeded in gathering some 48 of the fugitives with whom a new settlement also called Granville Town was started around Fourah Bay.

Meanwhile in 1790 a St. George's Bay Company had been founded by a group of philanthropists. In July 1791 a Royal Charter was granted to this company and its name was changed to the Sierra Leone Company, with William Wilberforce, Granville Sharp, Thomas Clarkson, and Henry Thornton among its directors.

The function of this company was a dual one. It was not only to be a commercial concern, but was also entrusted with the administration of the Sierra Leone settlement.

In February 1792, the Sierra Leone Company landed 19 officials including a governor with a council, a team of Civil Servants, and a military body guard. Apparently the new settlement at Fourah Bay was over provided for, if all these officers were only intended to serve the small group of about 64 settlers in Granville Town. But this was not exactly the case: for the Sierra Leone Company was expecting to receive in Sierra Leone about the beginning of 1792, a large group of Free Black Settlers called the Nova Scotians. It was therefore mainly to administer this large group of New Colonists that the Sierra Leone Company sent out its team of officials in February, 1792.

The arrival of the Nova Scotians, numbering 1131, in Sierra Leone, on 28th. March 1792 under the command of John Clarkson brought a new lease of life to the dwindling population of Granville Town. Not only was the settlement strengthened numerically, but progress seemed much more certain now than before. For the Nova Scotians were intelligent and much more industrious than the Granville Sharp settlers.

But the Nova Scotians had little confidence in whitemen. While in Nova Scotia, the majority had been decieved by the British Government which failed to compensate them for their services in the American War of Independence. In Sierra Leone therefore, the Nova Scotians doubted whether the Sierra Leone Company would fulfil its own promise to them, namely: "A grant of not less than 20 acres of land" for each male adult, 10 acres for his wife, and 5 for every child. In fact no Nova Scotian had up to 10 acres of land all for himself in Sierra Leone. The Nova Scotian suspicion of the conduct of whitemen made co-operation between the two peoples difficult in Sierra Leone. Like the first settlers, the Nova Scotians, also had to combat the severity of the first rains and the hostility of the natives. Never-the-less, the Nova Scotians weathered the storm. They built their New Settlement, Freetown, from the present King Jimmy point to Falcombridge Battery, and from Water Street to Pa Demba's Village. They put up decent dwelling houses and planted rice, yams, plantains, eddows, cabbages, Indian Corn and Cotton. Some Nova Scotians took to large scale farming[1]: others were shop keepers, fishermen, retail merchants, rearers of live-stock and a few were mechanics. Women Nova Scotians

1 Butt-Thompson

were either midwives, school mistresses or laundresses. This virile group brought life once more into the settlement at Sierra Leone.

Commenting on the efficiency of the staff of the Sierra Leone Company, Butt-Thompson wrote:

> "The staff was miserably insufficient, and every officer of the company had to do duty for three in a climate such that a man is fortunate if he can find health for the work of one during a continuous twelve months."[1]

Besides the shortage of staff there were too many changes of officers. For example, between 1792 and 1800, there were eight changes in the Governorship of the settlement; such that hardly any Governor ruled for a complete year before he was superseded by a new individual. Under such conditions continuity of policy was almost impossible to achieve. Between 1793 and 1800 it became clear that the Sierra Leone Company could not continue to defray the expenses of the settlement. About the end of 1793 the company lost over £4,000 worth of produce by the burning of the Store-Ship, "The York." Then came the French bombardment in September, 1794 in which the company lost all its silver currency and all the cargo that was on board "The Harpy" which had just arrived with supplies and trade goods.

1 Butt-Thompson P.84

The company was therefore obliged to appeal to the British Government for financial assistance. The appeal was successful and in 1796 the first Parliamentary Grant of £4,000 was made to the Sierra Leone Company. In 1797 the grant was repeated and from then onwards it was raised to a £10,000 annual grant for the Civil Establishment of the settlement. Thus the Sierra Leone Company was able to keep alive for a while.

In 1800 a new batch of settlers, the Maroons, numbering about 550 was added to the Freetown settlement. These Maroons had had a checkered history. They were of African decent possibly from the Coromantine Coast, but had, during their long stay abroad got both European and West Indians blood infused in their vains, through intermarriage.[1] The Ancestors of the Maroons had been taken to Jamaica as slaves of Spanish Masters. When Jamaica was captured by the British in 1655 most of the resident Spaniards fled to Cuba while their slaves took to the mountains of the Eastern and Northern parts of the Island. These runaway slaves were called the Maroons or hog-hunters.[2] Captain F.W. Butt-Thompson offers three alternative suggestions of the origin of the word Maroon. According to him, the word Maroon

1 Dallas, Letter II

2 Dallas Letter II Page 24

could have been formed from MARRANO = Young Pig, or CIMARRON = a fugitive; or MURUNO = a Moor - all three being Spanish words.[1] The Maroons used their mountains abroads as hide outs from which they lead predatory raids on the inhabitants of Jamaica. In 1690, after the Slave Insurrection in the Parish of Clarendon, the Maroon force was increased by these rebels. From then onwards the Maroons continued to welcome all fugitive slaves or rebels into their ranks.

As the Maroon force grew in numbers so did they increase their plundering raids on the citizens of Jamaica. Now and again in the 18th century, the Jamaican Governors tried to arrange peace treaties with the Maroons. But these were all only temporary measures. In August, 1795, the Maroons infuriated by the high handed actions of the British Officials of the island, took up arms to defend themselves. So started the Maroon War which lasted until 22nd March 1796, with heavy loses on both sides. On the 6th June the Maroons were shipped from Jamaica to Halifax which they reached between 21st and 23rd July. The North American climate being unsuitable for them, the Maroons were finally transported to Sierra Leone about the end of September 1800.[2]

1 Sierra Leone in History and Tradition - Chapter XV. P 120
2 Dallas page 285

Thus a third and different group of settlers came to add its quota to the development of the Sierra Leone settlement of just thirteen years old.

Although, the Granville Sharp settlers, the Nova Scotians and the Maroons, represented different groups of peoples, yet, there were many common points among them all. Their past histories as has been shown, are in many ways similar. To each and everyone of the members of these groups, the African ancestry was a common factor. Consequently in customs and traditions the Settler groups had many similar practices. Because of their past association with Europeans, an aping of the European way of life was a second nature to all the settlers, the majority of whom were literate. These last two attributes of the settlers, their past European association and their literacy were their greatest trump cards. Indeed these attributes went a great way to open the eyes of the Settlers and to make them sentitive to both good and ill-treatment from their benefactors, who were in the main, Europeans. Thus as far as bargaining with Europeans went the Settlers were not altogether in the dark, but could hold their own. The Settlers, therefore, were not only conscious of their individual priviledges, but on the whole were treated as respectable people by their European well-wishers.

The £10,000, annual Parliament Grant for the Civil Establishement of the Colony of Sierra Leone which had commenced in 1797 did not prove adequate in the years that followed. The Sierra Leone Company on the other hand was not in a position to fill up the gap. Moreover, it was evident that the company's forces could not give the colonists the protection which they so needed if they were to survive. The only alternative, therefore, was to effect a complete take over from the Sierra Leone Company, by the British Government, of all administrative responsibilities for the Sierra Leone Settlement. This came into being on 1st January, 1808.

The year 1808 was a momentous one in the History of Sierra Leone. For it did not only mark the end of the management of the settlement by private enterprise - The Sierra Leone Company - and the beginning of real British control when Sierra Leone was declared a Crown Colony, 1st January 1808, but it also saw the initiation of a new experiment in colonization. Because the very Act which declared slavery illegal in 1808, constituted in Sierra Leone a court of Vice Admiralty for the trial and adjudation of captured slave vessels, the human cargoes of which were to be emancipated and settled in the Colony of Sierra Leone.

This experiment of 1808 was new and unprecedented in many way. In magnitude, it surpassed all the former British colonial experiments; and in planning and conception it never had, and never has had an emulator. It was a unique experiment in the colonization of negroes in Africa. From 10th November, 1808 when the first captured slave ship, Maria Paul was condemned to the year 1864 when the last slaver was brought into Freetown Harbour, a total of about 84,000 Negroes was liberated and settled in the Colony of Sierra Leone. Within 26 years, from June 1819 to June 1845, some 64,625 slaves were emancipated in Freetown.[1]

In numbers, therefore, the Liberated African group exceeded all the former classes of settlers that had been planted in Sierra Leone since 1787. But for their continuous influx into the Colony, it is doubtful whether the Sierra Leone Settlement would have survived. There had been hardly any appreciable increase in the ranks of the Settler Groups. The Granville Sharp settlers had almost all faded out even before 1800; the Nova Scotians were inclined to leave the settlement to emigrate into the neighbourhood; and the Maroons also showed a tendency for emigration; probably because they had never forgotten their mountain homes in Jamaica, and partly because they resented the passing of the Militia Act of 20th November, 1811, which stated that all males between

1 Kuczynski, Page 102

thirteen and sixty should take an oath and be enrolled; and partly also, because they were enticed by news of the demand for labour in the West Indies during the 1840's. Thus the survival of the Sierra Leone settlement was due to the arrival of the Liberated Africans whose large numbers revivified the shrinking population.

The arrival of the settler groups, in Sierra Leone, the Granville Sharp, Nova Scotian, and Maroon Groups, had been heralded by some kind of planning and preparation. The Black Poor Committee utilized Dr. Henry Smeathman's plan[1] in settling the Granville Sharp Colonists. The Sierra Leone Company made preparations for the reception of the Nova Scotians; even the much buffetted Maroons were not just flung into the Sierra Leone Settlement; but plans were made for their reception and location in a part of Freetown. On the other hand, hardly any plans were made for the reception of the Liberated Africans into the Colony of Sierra Leone. Point of fact, the creation of an asylum at Sierra Leone for the settlement of rescued slaves was a plan conveived and born over night. It was, hardly, ever thought of from the onset that some 84,000 of Re-captives would have to be accommodated in the Sierra Leone Settlement with the institutions of a Vice Admiralty Court in Freetown with powers to try and adjudicate

1 Wadstrom

captured slavers. Consequently when ship loads of half naked, hungry, emaciated human beings started to pour into Freetown that was ill-prepared to receive them, the spectacle presented was pathetic. It was only when they were all huddled in one or the other of two appartments in the African Yard or King's Yard, that adhoc plans were made for their dispersal so that room could be available in the King's Yard for fresh arrivals.

Moreover as the Liberated Africans were drawn from divers tribes of Africa south of the Sahara, it would have been a task for the British Government to evolve a plan of settlement that would suite such a heterogenous collection of peoples. Fortunately, however, for the British, they were not put to this task. The Liberated Africans unlike the Settler groups who knew their rights and priviledges, because of the helpless nature of their position, were deprived of all barganing power. Consequently they had no choice, but to accept whatever plans their new masters, their liberators, had for them in stock. Having been rescued from the Jaws of slavery, with all the evils attendant on slavery, the Liberated Africans, had been conditioned to endure hardship. Apparently, the British Government was aware of these facts and so did not worry to make suitable plans for

the settlement of the Liberated Africans in the Colony of Sierra Leone. Thus the settlement of Re-captives in the Colony of Sierra Leone was a novelty in the history of British colonization.

While the Granville Sharp colonists, the Nova Scotians, and the Maroons could be called settlers in Sierra Leone; because the majority of them had no Sierra Leonean connection at all, and because of their long removal from the African scene; the Liberated Africans on the other hand, although the bulk of them did not come from Sierra Leone, were natives of Africa and not settlers in the strict interpretation of the word. For the Liberated Africans did not suffer transportation to a different climate as the Nova Scotians or Maroons nor did they really experience the rigors of slavery abroad. Indeed when landed in Freetown, many re-captures were only a few hundred miles from their birth places, and some even less than a hundred miles. But for linguistic differences, any of the Liberated Africans could have passed for an aborigin of Sierra Leone. For unlike the settler groups that had imbibed certain European traits and modes of life, the Liberated Africans were as African as the Temnes whom they found in Freetown on their arrival.

By 1808 the settler groups had formed themselves into an influential class. They were the educated people as well as the businessmen of the colony. To them the natives looked up for enlightenment. But the Settlers took undue advantage of their priviledged position to eschew any attempt at mixing with the natives. To the Settler mind the only acceptable relationship between him and the nativeman was that of a master servant partnership. No wonder therefore that the Temnees labelled the settlers, and all those Africans who copyed the European way of life, "O potofari" meaning "A black white man." Just as the Settlers disliked contact with the Aborigines even more so did they resent association with the Liberated Africans, a wretched gang of peoples whom they had seen landed with labels on their nacked forms.[1] Indeed to the settlers, the name Liberated African connoted unsavoury attributed like - barbarity, illiteracy, paganism and others. Even in their elevated forms, the Liberated Africans were still looked upon with a scornful eye by the Settlers who had had an indelible picture in their minds of the wretched states in which the recaptures had arrived. However, the Liberated African was accepted into the home of the Settler on the same basis as the natives, i.e. as a household servant. This was the picture

1 Rankin - Pages 75-93

of the class relationship in Freetown the seat of the Settlers who did not like the Liberated Africans; therefore the Liberated Africans could best prosper if removed from Freetown. There were thus after 1808 broadly speaking three classes of peoples; the Aboriginees, the Settler Groups, and the Liberated Africans all of whom were to live together to develop the Colony, the history of which development is contained in the study of the growth of the Liberated African settlements in the Colony Villages.

C H A P T E R I

THE ARRIVAL OF A SLAVE SHIP

A cannon blast announces the arrival of a Prize Ship in Freetown harbour. This is either the beginning of a day's work or a mere signal showing that there is still fresh job in store for the Staffs of the Liberated African Department and that of the Courts of adjudication. But this gun fire is not only an alarm, calling officers to duty. It is as it were, a triumphant note sounded by a victorious hero, returning home with a proud prize. The hero in this case being one of the captains of H.M.S.War Ships that played an outstanding role in the suppression of the Slave Trade; and the proud prize being a ship-load of negroes, locked up in the hole of a slave vessel. For the slaves about to be Liberated, this cannon blast should have a solemn significance: if only they knew what servitude they had been rescued from, and what future awaited them.[1]

When a slave ship arrives in the harbour, the Court of Adjudication, either the Vice Admiralty Court or the Mixed Commission Court, makes the necessary declarations appertaining to slave liberation, before the Marshal of the Court is authorized to land the Captured Negroes within twenty four hours.

1 Rankin v 2, Page 106

The Marshal of the Court is accompanied by the Assistant Superintendent of Liberated Africans, the Colonial Surgeon, and often, though illegally, by a recruiting officer of H. M. Forces.[1] If the Slave ship is condemned a list of the total number of negroes on board, distinguishing adults and children, is prepared by the Marshal; for which list the Assistant Superintendent issues a receipt to the Marshal. There and then the Assistant Superintendent takes care of the Captured Negroes, who arriving stark naked, have to be provided with clothing - Wrappers.

The Surgeon attends to the sick who need immediate treatment while the rest of the sick are sent to hospital, after completing registration. Before 7th June 1829 many of the sick were sent to hospital even before adjudication. On the completion of registration on board, the Captured Africans are then landed and led to the African Yard which was to be their first aboad until after adjudication. While the surgeon is attending the sick, the recruiting officer busies himself with ear-marking possible recruits from the ranks of the stalwart men.

It often happens that the Colonial Surgeon is not immediately available to attend to the Captured Negroes.

1 14-8-43 - Letter Book - Terry to Macdonald: 20-7-42
Letter Book

In this case the work of the recruiting officer, who finds it easier to work in conjunction with the surgeon is delayed. Before 1837, recruiting parties were admitted into the African Yard to select men - Volunteer Recruits. Such selected men were allowed to be taken to the barracks and there to be examined by the medical officer, who on account of his many duties could not go to the African Yard for the inspection of recruits. Rejected volunteers were returned to the African Yard.[1] The African Yard was the home of the unemancipated Negroes. But even after emancipation many Liberated Africans spent various lengths of time here before they were disposed of. The African Yard was situated on the rising ground, on the western side of King Jimmy's Wharf, where the present Lower Dispensary of the Connaught Hospital now stands. The main gate of the Yard then bore the following inscription, a part of which can still be read today:- "Royal Hospital and Asylum for Africans rescued from Slavery by British Valour and Philanthropy."

The African Yard was a fairly rectangular area having the west and south sides occupied by a chain of low sheds with shingled roof, in which the Captured Negroes slept; while the north and east sides were surrounded with stone walls measuring 150 feet by 103 feet. Within this enclosure stood a brick

1 10-4-1837 S.O.S.Despatch

house measuring 41 feet 3 inches by 23 feet, with shingled roofs and with a piazza or veranda, 8 feet broad on the north side. The brick house was a one story building, the top of which was the residence of the Black-Smith attached to the Colonial Engineer Department. The basement was the smith's workshop, referred to at times as the Forge Yard. The sheds measured externally 88 feet 1 inch on the west side and 136 feet on the south side. Originally they had been intended to house Liberated lads, apprenticed to the Engineer Department. In 1825 the buildings in this quadrangle were given to the Liberated African Department to be converted to provide accommodation for Newly arrived Liberated Africans from slave vessels during the process of adjudication, as well as to house Liberated Africans who were employed on Public Works during the first three months of their arrival. It was in 1825 that a kitchen and out-houses were added to the buildings in the African Yard. It is probable that there was a well in this Yard. On the other hand the proximity of the King's Yard with King Jimmy's Spring, about a hundred yards distance, made easy access to the source of drinking water.[1] Moreover, according to Colonel Denham there was no well in Freetown before his arrival as he sank the first few wells.[2]

1 31st May,1831 - Return of all Public Buildings - Miscellaneous Returns, 1826 - 38

2 14-5-28 Governor's Despatch to S.O.S.

In the African Yard there was enough room for about 600 people - "600 can be well accommodated."[1] Point of fact in the 1830's there were often between 200 to 500 Liberated Africans in the King's Yard, awaiting disposal.[2] For example on 3rd January 1831, Governor A. Findlay in a despatch to Sir George Murray stated that there were about 250 Liberated Africans engaged on Public Works and these were housed in a part of the "Commodious building" kept for the accommodation of Captured Negroes while awaiting adjudication. On Tuesday 2nd January 1849 there were some 774 Liberated Africans in the Yard. The Yard at one time accommodated 937 Liberated Africans during Governor Frazer's administration.[3]

This was the first home of almost all the Liberated Africans, before their disposal: and the period spent here by each individual varied from a few hours to many weeks. In the Liberated African Yard were provided accommodation, food and clothing for the Recaptives. To a people who had experienced hardship, either in slave baraccons or on board slavers, in the holes of which they had been thightly packed, one on top of the other, sleeping on a mat spread on the naked

1 Miscellaneous Returns 31st May 1831

2. Miscellaneous Returns 1834-38 - Daily State Book -Jan.1849

3 6-10-30 Findlay to Hay

floor of a house, and with a blanket to cover, was a luxury. Thus to provide bedding for the Re-Captives was no problem. Old and young, male and female all were supplied with a nine pence mat each to pass the nights.[1]

From the Daily State of the Liberated Africans for 2nd January 1849 and 17th March 1830 there seems to have been very little or no variety at all in the diet of the Re-Captives in the African Yard. Rice, which was then rather cheap, costing 8s.6d. per bushel, and foofoo, sold at three quarters of a penny for a ball, formed their staple food. Yam and cocoa and farina were occasionally served. There were two meals, one at 9:00 a.m. the other at 4:00 p.m. Stew was the normal accompanyment of rice; while a palaver sauce of cocoa leaf smoothly went with the foofoo. In these stew and sauce pots were some lumps of meat; meat was also cheap at first. A pound of meat could be bought for 2½ pennies. When accessing the quality of food that was provided for the Re-Captives, we must remember that the Liberated African Department could only spend up to three pence per head on food as that was the average cost of the maintenance of each Liberated African per day. As for clothing all the Liberated Africans wore the same uniform. The men put on Duck Frock and Duck Kilts. Duck Frock was a kind of loose flowing garment;

1 April Returns of Liberated Africans 1829

something like a short gown with short sleeves: and Duck Kilts were a kind of trousers. All of these items were freely supplied to the Re-Captives in the King's Yard.[1]

There is no evidence to suggest that the Liberated Africans in the King's Yard might have had some recreational facilities. Commodious, though, the African Yard was, it would hardly have been a suitable ground for physical exercises. One can therefore imagine, that after taking their meal the Liberated Africans, not having any thing else to do, would recoil to their individual appartments and pray for a sweet and balmy slumber. It is improbable that the Captured Negroes in the African Yard who had not yet been disposed of were normally put to work. Consequently, the life of the Re-Captives in the King's Yard, before adjudication was an alternation of sleep, feed and rest.

The Courts of adjudication, both the Vice Admiralty Court, established on the 16th March 1808 and the Mixed Commission Courts, established in June 1819, were slow in action; partly because of the volume of work that at times awaited their attention, and partly because of the shortage of staff. For instance the Court of Vice Admiralty dealt with cases which involved strained relationships between apprentices and their masters, and such cases were always many on the calender.[2]

1 Gov. Despatch to S. O. S. April 1829

2 L.A.D. Letter Book, 10-5-34

A trial for slave dealing in the Mixed Commission Court at times lasted for weeks.[1] According to the provisions of the treaties between Great Britain and Portugal, Spain, The Netherlands and Brazil, each of the Mixed Commission Courts was to consist of a Commissary Judge, a Commissioner of Arbitration and a Registrar from each of the signatory Powers. Later on Sweeden, the United States of America, Holland and France became members of the Court of Mixed Commissions.

The Vice Admiralty Court was to work under the following mandate:

> "All slaves and vessels carrying them with all effects on board should be sent before this Court for trial and adjudication; that the Captors should hand over all slaves captured to the proper officer who became responsible for them, and gave certificates for bounties due to Captors."[2]

While for some time a registrar and two clerks were the full complement of the staff of the Vice Admiralty Court, the Mixed Commission Court consisted of the following officers: the Registrar and his clerks, the Commissioners and their clerks, the Proctors of the Court, and a Marshal. Occasionally the Governor of the Colony of Sierra Leone sat in the Court to

1 Govt. Despatches to S. O. S. 4-1-23

2 J. J. Crooks - Pages 70-71

give his casting vote whenever there was a tie. Besides taking charge of the registration of the captured ship's cargo, it was also the duty of the Registrar of the Mixed Commission Court to supply copies of examination papers of the prize ships to the Captors and Claimants. If the original of such ship's papers were in a foreign language, the Registrar would make translations of such papers into the languages of the parties in court; but the expenses of the translations should be charged to the party from whom the request for translations came.[1] For the performance of these duties neither the Registrar, nor any of the members of the Court, nor the Court itself, was allowed to take any extra fees. But before 1836, an illegal practice of charging fees by the Registrar, as part of his private emoulments had started. Then three sets of illegal fees were charged. The first was a fee of a pound, charged to the Captors for a copy of one of seven receipts for the proceeds of the prize sale. The second was a fee of four guineas to be paid by the purchaser of the sold vessel in exchange for a receipt from the Collector of Customs. And the third was a moderate charge of five shillings for a copy of any document.

1 S. O. S. Despatch 7-5-36. George Maclean to Lords of the Treasury.

The Marshal's duties were to take charge of the captured vessel before trial and to assist in the prize sales as has already been mentioned. The Commissioners were the judges of the Court to which were attached lawyers, referred to generally as proctors.

When a vessel is condemned and its cargo of slaves set free, by any of the Courts of adjudication, a new life begins for many Re-Captives. For this is the time for the disposal of the Liberated Africans, a disposal which could be done in several ways. Some Liberated Africans are enlisted into H. M. Forces, some are assigned to the Public Works, others are apprenticed and a good many are located in the Villages of the Colony.

C H A P T E R II

DISPOSAL OF LIBERATED AFRICANS

According to the Order of Council dated 16th March 1808, the Collector or Chief Officer of Customs was, for the meantime appointed the receiving officer of the Captured Negroes. It was his responsibility to provide suitable maintenance for the captured Negroes from the time of their arrival in the Freetown Harbour until they were enlisted, apprenticed or disposed of. Liberated Africans therefore were either enlisted in H. M. Forces, or bound as apprentices to masters, or put to work on the Public Works, or billeted on settled families, or located in parts of Freetown or in the Colony Villages. There was much variety in this manner of disposal of the Captured Negroes.

The Royal African Corps, Detachments of the West India Regiments, and the Royal Navy were the forces into which Liberated Africans were recruited. Liberated Africans who served in H. M. Naval force were employed as apprentices who were to learn naval duties which required the use of unskilled labour. H. M. Vessels calling at Freetown usually took some four to six Liberated African lads on board. Before examining the disposal of Liberated Africans in the Land Forces, I shall first outline the history of the origin of these forces.

The Royal African Corps came into being in 1705 as a result of an appeal made by the Royal African Company of Merchants for volunteer soldiers to serve in West Africa, then

called "GuYne." The Royal African Corps was therefore intended to be a foreign Regiment, although the first recruits were in the main, British. When the Directors of the Sierra Leone Company secured a charter from Britain on 5th July, 1799, creating the settlement an independent Colony, with legislative powers, a detachment of 50 men of the Royal African Corps was transferred from Goree to Sierra Leone for defence purposes. The first detachment of Royal African Corps was billeted in Freetown until the completion of the Barracks at Fort Thornton. With the arrival of the Liberated Africans in 1808, it was thought fit to recruit some of the able-bodied ones into the Royal African Corps. This move, however, for the first two years was hindered by the objection of the British Military authorities, who would not accept the enrollment of Negroes.[1] However in 1810, the first Black Recruits into the army formed a new Company.

Meanwhile after 1808 the West India Regiments which had been formed found recruits from the ranks of the Newly Arrived Liberated Africans. In 1812, a recruiting establishment for West India Regiments was formed at Bunce Island, then called Bance Island, where the recruits could be confined during training. On the 7th March, 1816, the War Office ordered the discontinuance of recruiting, as a reduction of the 7th and

1 Kuczinski Page 115

8th West India Regiments was being contemplated. On the other hand the Royal African Corps was reduced following instructions dated "Horse Guards, 28th February, 1817." The Royal African Corps was at last disbanded in 1819 when the Headquarters and five Companies of the 2nd West India Regiment replaced it in Sierra Leone. These were the Land Forces into which the Re-Captives were recruited.[1]

The manner of recruitment of Liberated Africans into the Forces was always a fruitful source of complaint and grievance, mainly because of the disagreement between the Liberated African Department officers and the Recruiting officers: the one insisting on the rigid conformity with official procedure while the other, eager to secure recruits, regarded dogged adherenace to the last letter of the law as a useless and painful task.

In a letter of 29th February 1836, Mr. C. B. Jones, Assistant Superintendent of Liberated Africans, demanded the release of a Liberated African who had been inveigled into the barracks and enlisted in the Royal African Corps, without the authority of the Department. On 21st September, 1836 Mr. C. B. Jones addressed another protest to the Lieutenant Colonel commanding the Troops against the practice of secretely enlisting Liberated Africans in the Forces .

1 Kuczinski Pages 115-123; J. J. Crooks

Captain Smales of the 3rd West India Regiment was reprimanded by Mr. Terry the then Assistant Superintendent for leading 174 Captured Negroes into the barracks to be enlisted even before they had been registered.[1] The Secretary of State R. W. Hay in a letter dated 28th May 1834 ordered Governor Temple to refrain from employing force in procurring recruits from the Liberated Africans for the Military service.

That the Military officers frequently clashed with the Liberated African Department about the method of enlistment into the forces is clearly shown by the above references. But how much consistency was followed by the Liberated African Department in the procedure of enrolling Liberated African into the Forces is another thing. Point of fact, not only did the method of enrolling Liberated Africans in the Forces change from time to time, but it appears that the Governors were given ample powers of varying the system of recruitment, even to the extent of baffling the Home Government. Hay in a letter to Lieutenant Colonel Denham asked:

> "I should wish to know what is the present practice with regard their,Liberated Africans, enlistment into the Royal African Corps; whether the Sergent, as I suppose is the case, proceeds on board the slave ship, and engages volunteers for the King's service, even before they reach the shore, or whether a more correct, although perhaps not so effective a course, is pursued, viz, applying to them after they have become better acquainted with their actual situation by a residence ashore." [2]

1 20-7-42. L.B.

2 12-12-1827 - S. O. S. Despatch.

In September 1842, after information had reached Lord Stanley that a party of Liberated Africans had been enlisted into H. M. Service on board the vessel which had brought the captured ship to Sierra Leone, before registration, Stanley replied: "With regard to the enlistment of Africans on board ship before they are landed, I see no objection to the practice", provided the recruiting officer communicated with the Assistant Superintendent so that the Assistant Superintendent would accompany the recruiting officer on board, after which the recruits should be immediately taken to the Liberated African Department for registration.

The official policy towards the method of recruiting Re-Captives into the Forces was one of flexibility. It is certain that there were established formalities concerning this process. But while the Home Government was tolerant about non-adherence to these formalities, the Liberated African Department in Freetown compelled the Military to go by whatever present method of enlistment it thought fit.[1] And so we see Terry standing firm and declaring that,

> "To remove Newly brought in Liberated Africans from a vessel is not any part of the duty of a military officer, but is one which belongs solely to this Department,"

meaning the Liberated African Department.[2]

1 10-4-1837 - S.O.S.Despatches. 14-5-1823 - Denham to Hay

2 Terry to Captain Smales, 23-7-42 - Letter Book

Until about 1824 recruitment was always a colourful and ceremonious occasion. On the Landing of a cargo of Captured slaves in Freetown, a party of soldiers, gaily attired in their regimental uniform, and accompanied by military drummers, would be admitted into the African Yard to choose recruits from the ranks of the Newly arrived slaves. Many of the Captured Negroes "Pleased with the brilliant uniform, and talked over by the recruiting party, who were men specially selected for this duty on account of their knowledge of African languages, offered themselves as recruits."[1] If the Medical officer was in attendance at the time of recruitment then he would examine the volunteers, and those who passed the medical test were accepted as recruits, were given new names and then led to the Church to be baptized. After the Church ceremony the recruits marched into the barracks to the tune of the drummers.[2]

This was the general method of recruitment of Liberated Africans into the Forces. There were, however, occasionally, some variations in the procedure. For instance, in cases where the Medical officer was not immediately available to accompany the recruiting party to the African Yard, then the volunteers were taken to the barracks where they would later on be examined by the Medical officer. Usually not all the volunteers would pass the test. Those who failed were sent

1 J. J. Crooks Page 71

2. 12-7-1824. L.B.

back to the African Yard to the great displeasure and annoyance of the Staff of the Liberated African Department who would now have to make alternative arrangements for the disposal of rejected volunteer-recruits. Consequently, the Liberated African Department was always vehemently opposed to a procedure of selecting recruits in the absence of a Medical officer.[1] Colonel Denham in a despatch to R.W.Hay dated 14th May 1828, described the process of recruitment which was then in practice thus:

> "Scarcely an hour after the landing of several hundred poor creatures from a slave vessel, I found in the African Yard, an officer, an Assistant Surgeon, and a party of the Royal African Corps, with about 100 poor fellows perfectly naked, who were undergoing the inspection. Such of them as appeared fit for service were set apart, without asking them one question as to their unwillingness or not."

Denham was so much against this procedure of recruitment that he ordered the recruiting party to quit the African Yard. "This practice was never repeated", at least was never repeated in Denham's time.[2] During Colonel Denham's superintendence, a new procedure was adopted in recruitment. After several days of gratuitous feeding of the Newly Arrived Africans, Non Commissioned officers of their own countrymen were then allowed to visit the Liberated Africans. The officers would explain to the Re-Captives what was entailed

1 10-4-37 S. O. S.

2 Denham to Hay 14-5-28

in enlistment; a task which took several days. When this was done, an officer came to collect the volunteers in the presence of the Assistant Superintendent. This new method was found very rewarding, for it reduced the number of desertion in the army, which used to be between 12 and 15 deserters in one night.[1]

On the whole, the Liberated Africans do not seem to have been very disposed to enlistment. And one wonders how successful any system of recruitment would have been which did not apply either some cohersion or enticement in the recruiting process. In a despatch dated 28th May 1834 R. W. Hay ordered Governor Temple to refrain from employing force in procuring recruits from the Liberated Africans for military service. Even Colonel Denham's new system was not entirely free from enticement. For who knows what pictures of regimental life would have been portrayed by the Non-Commissioned officers to the Captured Negroes! Moreover it was an accepted fact that it was easier to obtain recruits from the ranks of the Newly Arrived Liberated Africans who had not yet had any intercourse with any outside influence, than it was to obtain recruits from those Captured Negroes who had already spent some time in the African Yard, no matter how brief that period spent in the Yard might be. From this we can infer that the picture of regimental life portrayed by the Non-Commissioned officers to the Liberated Africans was different from that picture which their more experienced comrades

1 14-5-28. 26-6-27 Letter Book

in the African Yard would show them.[1] In the 1820's however, recruits were even obtained form the Liberated Africans settled in the villages.[2] But this does not seem to have been a fruitful source for recruits.[3]

The unwillingness of Liberated Africans to enlist in the army was due not so much to a resentment of Military life on their part, but even more so to the fact that their minds were poisoned against the army as a joint result of the low esteem which the Freetown public, especially the Settlers had for the Military, as well as a result of the fear of army discipline, which, unhappily again was partly infused into the Liberated Africans by the Freetown community and partly also by the many deserters of the army.[4]

Enlistment of Liberated Africans was not only confined to the Land Forces. A considerable number of Re-Captives was also enlisted in the Navy where they served as labourers and apprentices. Both adults and youths served in the Navy. It was customary to take between 4 and 6 Liberated African lads on board H. M. Vessels calling in Freetown Harbour.[5]

1 29-4-37 S. O. S.

2 12-7-24. L. B.

3 Kuczinski Page 119 ff

4 J. J. Crooks Page 87: Kuczinski Page 119 ff

5 T.H.B. Pratt to Lieut. Commander Quin of "Britomart." 17-5-34 Letter Book

Each Liberated African serving on board H. M. Vessels received between 12 shillings and 30 shillings, per annum.[1] For boys apprenticed on board H. M. Vessels which operated in temperate latitudes, a supply of warm clothing in place of their usual Duck Frock and Kilt was necessary.

Besides enlistment in the Forces, a large number of Liberated Africans was placed on the Public Works for a period of about three months before they were finally located in the villages or in parts of Freetown. Whilst on the Public Works the Liberated Africans were given a daily allowance of 2d. for their upkeep, were provided with clothing, Ducks; and were accommodated in a part of the African Yard. Before Governor D. H. Campbell's period, Liberated Africans employed on the Public Works were indescently clothed with a "small particle of cloth passed round their waist, scarcely sufficient to cover their nakedness."[2] In 1835, however, as the numbers of Liberated Africans located in the Public Works increased, it was no longer possible to have adequate accommodation for them all in the African Yard. Consequently the lower part of the house in Regent's Square, a house which had formerly been used to lodge unadjudicated Liberated Africans occasionally, was appropriated for the use of Liberated Africans working in Public Works.[3] Liberated Africans employed

1 30-10-38 Glenelg to Doherty

2 Petition of Principal Maroons - 1837

3 26-2-35 Foreign Office to R.W.Hay: 23-2-35 William Smith to Lord Viscount Mahan.

on Public Works were either engaged in road works, such as making bridges, repairing the roads, or cutting down weeds; or were engaged as attendants of masons in building programes; or were employed in some odd jobs like "cutting fence sticks, clearing Barrack Hill of weeds and cooking."[1]

When Major General Charles Turner took up the administration of the Colony in 1825 he was very bitter in his criticism of the lack of industry of Liberated Africans employed on the Public Works. As far as Turner was concerned the people employed on Government Works were receiving pay for which hardly any work was done. Consequently idleness and indifference about work were rampant. "They take the government pay and allowances without gratitude, and their own energies are paralysed by it."[2] Turner was not opposed to the employment of Liberated Africans in Public Works, point of fact he placed as many of them on the Public Works as he could. What Turner was against was a general slovenly attitude to work which was not only confined to the Liberated Africans but was a general characteristic of the establishments of the Colony. After Governor Turner's arrival a choice lot of Liberated Africans was employed as labourers by the Government Departments. Such labourers were rationed and provided with

1 Daily State of Liberated Africans at Freetown 17-3-1830

2 J.J.Crooks Page 118

clothing by the Liberated African Department while their employing Department met the cost of their pay.[1] On the whole, with proper supervision, the Liberated Africans engaged in the Public Works were not only rendering service to the Colony, but were also indirectly benefiting from their experience on the Public Works. For, as the Liberated Africans on the Public Works were supposed to be responsible for their own feed, they started at an early period to learn about thrift and to value agriculture. The period spent on the Public Works therefore inculcated habits of industry in the Newly Arrived Liberated Africans, and it also showed them that when they were later on settled in the villages they could earn a living through agricultural work.

Unfortunately, however, not all the governors advocated the temporary employment of Liberated Africans on Public Works. Captain Frazer for instance had put aside the billetting of Liberated Africans on Public Works, only for his successor Lieutenant Alex Findlay to start it again.[2] Before Captain Frazer took up the Government of the Colony it was customary to exact three months labour from the Newly Arrived Liberated Africans on the Public Works. That system was abolished by Frazer, although in cases of emergency the service of the Newly Arrived Liberated African could be

1 - 17-2-1826 T.Cole to Commissioners of Enquiry-Letter Book

2 - 6-10-30 Findlay to Hay

summoned to perform Public Works.[1] That there were differences in the attitudes of Governors towards the temporary location of Liberated Africans on Public Works was not so strange as to learn that the British Government itself was not definitely decided on the issue of employing Liberated Africans on the Public Works. Murray for instance requested an explanation of "Public Works" as applied to Freetown. Murray was of the opinion that it would be better to locate the Liberated Africans immediately than to put them on the Public Works.[2] According to Findlay not more than about one fifth of a cargo of Liberated Africans "may be found fit to be employed on the Public Works."[3] However by December, 1830, there was a total of about 250 Liberated Africans working on the Public Works.[4] From 1st July to 31st December, 1833, out of 1063 Liberated Africans received into the Colony 181 were placed on the Public Works in Freetown.[5] Out of 205 Captured Negroes liberated in the period 1st July to 31st December, 1829, 86 were placed on the Public Works.[6] On Wednesday 17th March, 1830 there were 248 Liberated Africans employed on the Public Works.[7]

1 16-4-30 Letter Book - T. Cole to C. Jones.

2. 17-9-30 Murray to Findlay. S. O. S.

3. 7-4-32 Letter Book

4. 3-1-31 Letter Book

5. Miscellaneous Return Book 1826-1834 Page 376

6. Liberated Africans Returns December 1829

7. Sierra Leone Duplicate Despatches January-November 1830

Thus although the percentage of Liberated Africans that was put on the Public Works might have been but a fraction of the total number of emancipated Negroes, yet, because of the continuous arrival of new batches of Liberated Africans, the number of Public Workers was always considerable when ever the system of exacting three months labour on the Public Works was in operation.

The apprenticeship system provided another method of temporarily locating Liberated Africans. Officially, it was one of the recognized ways in which Liberated Africans could be disposed of by the Collector of Customs, whose duties in this respect later on devolved on the Chief Superintendent of Captured Negroes, a designation that was in turn changed to Chief Superintendent of Liberated Africans: which in turn became General Superintendent of Liberated Africans. Both Lads and Adults, Males and Females were apprenticed.[1] Moreover there were variations in the Apprenticeship System.

Even before the arrival of the Liberated Africans, a system of apprenticing youths to skilled Craftsmen, Artisans and Mechanics had already been in operation in Freetown among the Settler groups. Then a Master Carpenter's daily wage was about 6s, with 3s. extra for his apprentice. The Apprentice was expected to perform all manual work. With the advent of the Liberated Africans and with the apprenticing of Liberated Africans along side with Setter lads, the performance of heavy manual work fell on the shoulders of the Liberated African Apprentice, thus leaving the Settler apprentice, in

1 9-2-36 Letter Book Waterloo Case Book

comparative idleness, to his own future detriment.[1]

Peter Leonard in "Records of a voyage to the Western Coast of Africa," comments on the apprenticeship system in the Colony of Sierra Leone during the 1830's thus:

> "By an application, any person in the colony of respectable appearance, may have several Liberated African Children apprenticed to him for a certain number of years in payment of a trifling sum."

Because there was no established system of check by which masters and mistresses could be required to render accounts of their apprentices, the well-being of the apprentice was at the mercy of the Master or Mistress. R.R. Kuczinski maintains, quite rightly, that the Apprenticing of Liberated Africans was open to various abuses.[2] For instance young apprenticed boys and girls who served as domestics were handed over to Masters and Mistresses without indentures. Moreover, there were many instances of apprentices being sold into slavery.[3]

Liberated African lads under 15 years were given out as indentures.[4] Each indenture was a separate agreement between the Master and the Apprentice in which each party was bound by law to fulfil its own obligations. A period of apprenticeship was fixed by the indenture, and during this time, the apprentice was bound to remain, subject to his masters commands which were to be willingly and honestly obeyed.

1 A. Residence at Sierra Leone - Chapter XXX

2 Kuczinski Page 128 ff

3 Report of Commission of 1830, and Findlay's comments 12-4-32. Findlay to Goderich.

4 15-6-27 Letter Book

On the other hand the master was bound by the indenture to teach and instruct his apprentice or to cause him to be taught and instructed in the English language, the principles of the Christian Religion, useful domestics and in agriculture. The Master was also bound to feed, cloth, and lodge his apprentice while under his care, and also to provide the apprentice with "Two good suits of wearing apparel" at the end of his period of service. During the last three years of service the apprentice was to receive one dollar a month extra as pay from his master.[1] A child under 10 years could be indentured for 7 years, if above 10 years, then the period of indenture was reduced to 5 years.[2] But women apprentices were kept until they were 21 years old; for example Mr. William Allen of Waterloo took a woman Nancy, then 20 years old as an apprentice for a year.[3] The agreement would be null and void if any of the terms were broken. Should the master by the cause of the nullity of the agreement, then he would forfeit his surety, which invariably should be returned to him at the expiration of the period of apprenticeship; a period which varied from one or two years to ten or more years.[4]

1 Waterloo Case Book - 10-2-36 - Letter Book

2 6-5-34. Letter Book

3 Waterloo Case Book - Letter Book 9-2-36

4 Letter Book - Waterloo - 9-2-36 Governor's despatch to S. O. S. 1822-24.

The indentured fee also varied from 10s. to 20s. normally; but occasionally fees like £20 were charged for an indenture.[1] The obligation that was placed on the Master to provide instruction in the Christian Religion for his apprentice entailed many responsibilities such as seeing that the apprentice attended Divine Service on Sundays as well as Sunday School.[2] Such were the terms of indenture.

The details in the method of Apprenticing Liberated Africans changed from one administration to the other. In Governor MacCarthy's time a number of boys was taken from each village as government apprentices. These boys were taught trades of Carpenter, Masons, Surveyors, Shinglemakers, Black-Smiths. Instruction was provided by skilled craftsmen and tradesmen who were hired by government for a period of two years, at the rate of 5s. to 6s. daily wage. While learning trades the boys were granted rations on the same scale and pattern as the Captured Negroes. But on the completion of the course they received 3s. to 10s. monthly allowance, according to the standard of proficiency attained. There can be hardly any doubt that such a system of apprenticing youths was in many ways a profitable enterprise.[3] After MacCarthy's

1 29-8-33 Letter Book, F. Campbell to Rev.I.Sessing;
5-3-35 Letter Book - Circular.
2 5-3-35 Letter Book - Circular to Managers
3 MacCarthy to Earl Bathurst 13-516

time there seems to have been a deterioration in the Apprenticeship System. Liberated African Lads were apprenticed in large numbers in the Gambia without the approval of the Secretary of State.[1] Major Ricketts in a letter to R. W. Hay dated 31st January, 1829 wrote:

> "It appears, upon examination, that a very considerable number of children have been indiscriminately bound out under indenture without any regard to the character or means of the individuals to whom the care and instruction of such apprentices have been entrusted."

It was almost taken for granted that anybody, upon application, and with the indentured fee in hand, could obtain an apprentice or a number of them. Indeed this is seen very clearly in the case of Theodore Canot, a notorious slave trader, who applied for a number of apprentices to be employed at Cape Mount.[2] Even fishermen were eligible to apply and could be granted apprentices.[3] As many masters could not possibly take good care of their apprentices, the apprentices were allowed "To wander about the colony seeking precarious

> subsistence among the people of their own nation, living in the colony villages, and it is much to be feared that many of these unfortunate victims, have been carried off to the adjacent countries, and from thence landed into the horrors of slavery."

With no proper and regular system of inspection, there is no doubt that the Apprenticeship system was open to abuse.

1 16-1-29, Letter Book

2 18-4-42 S.O.S. Despatch - Stanley to Macdonald.

3 4-12-38 Terry to Governor Doherty, Letter Book

According to Ricketts the last general inspection of apprentices was held nine years back.[1] In 1833, a plan for the periodic inspection of apprentices, as well as the appointment of a Superintendent for the management of apprentices was mooted by the Liberated African Department.[2] This had been preceded in 1832 by the institution of a general system of regular visitation of houses, by managers of the villages.[3] In 1838 an attempt was made at checking on applicants for apprentices. For an apprentice to be obtained one had to obtain a ticket signed by a minister or preacher and endorsed by a reputable member of the community in which one lived.[4]

The status of the apprentices was dubious. In a despatch from Earl Bathurst to Sir N. Campbell, Bathurst observed that the apprenticing of Captured Negroes was one of the causes that had retarded the improvement of the condition of Liberated Africans. According to Bathurst the Captured Negroes who had been taught trades, were retained in Government services, under the name of King's Apprentices. These Apprentices were fed, clothed, and allowed a little pocket money by Government, and in some cases small wages

1 Letter Book 31-1-29

2 15-5-33 Letter Book

3 1-3-32 Letter Book

4 19-9-38 Letter Book

fixed by the Governor or Superintendent were granted to them. In return the Apprentices were kept in a state of "forced servitude as long as the Governor or Superintendent pleases". As there was no definite limit to this period of servitude, the King's apprentices were kept in a discontented state during the whole time, as they were not free to lease their services as other colonists. To crown it all it was generally accepted that the Governor was at liberty to locate the Captured Negroes anywhere, for the Governor held that "the Captured Negroes are not free, and independent of him as the other colonists are."[1]

Ill-treatment of Liberated African Apprentices by their masters was a common occurence. In a despatch to Goderich, Governor Alexander Findlay submitted that it was a fact that many masters and mistresses were cruel to their apprentices, but that the Government had never let unpunished any case of cruelty to an apprentice.[2]

An Apprentice boy, William, indented to one John Wade Miller of Freetown was often mercilessly flogged by his master who would even go to the extent of putting salt in William's wounds that had been caused by whip marks; or on other occasions would dip William's head in a stool, and on one occasion forced William to lick a bandage that was covered with the humous of an ulcer.[3] There was a case of an

1 11-7-26 S. O. S. Despatch
2 12-4-32 Governor's Despatch
3 Letter Book. 4th June, 1831

apprenticed girl who lost the use of an eye through the cruelty of her master.[1] Or may I mention the case of an apprenticed girl, Jundy of Waterloo, who used to sell her master's foofoo in Freetown Market, walking all the way from Waterloo and living on one penny for three days![2] Indeed instances of ill-treatment of Liberated African Apprentices could be multiplied. In a despatch to Lord Viscount Goderich, dated 15th May 1833 it is reported that the hearing of cases involving Apprentices and their masters absorbed a considerable part of the time of the Assistant Superintendent of Liberated Africans: for "Scarcely a day passes but there occurs from twenty to thirty complaints before the Assistant Superintendent." As the Assistant Superintendent had other duties calling on his attention, he was seldom able to make proper investigations into such complaints with the results that "The apprentice generally elopes and frequently falls into the hands of kidnappers who infest the Colony."[3] Baffled by repeated complaints of ill-treatment of apprentices, the Liberated African Department, decided to withhold apprentices from "The Black people until their conduct to the children shall be improved."[4]

1 Returns Book 10-11-34

2 Letter Book 25-5-43

3 Letter Book 15-5-33 Despatch to Goderich

4 15-12-42 Terry to Melville, Letter Book.

This last reference might lead us wrongly to believe that masters of apprentices were always the culpits or the party who did not fulfil their own terms of the indenture. This was not so. It is a fact that many masters did not show due care and attention to the moral or physical development of their apprentices. Apprentices even changed hands being handed over by a former master to a new master. Captain Forster took a boy apprentice and handed him over to Mr. Wilson, a mess-man at the Barracks.[1] It is true that many apprentices were ill-clothed. For example, Conoh, a boy apprentice of one Ohcho of Waterloo, was described as "Naked" save for a "Tuntunga", that is a loin cloth.[2] An apprentice George Martin, had only one shirt, a country cloth, and "a garment so torn and filty that it is impossible to say what part of his dress it ever was." [3]

On the other hand many apprentices, were just bad characters who would trump up charges of their having been ill-treated by their Masters as a means of abrogating the indenture."Such is the ungovernable disposition of the greater part of these apprentices,...that scarcely a day passes but there occurs from twenty to thirty complaints..."[4]

1 12-6-44 Letter Book
2 Waterloo Letters - 16-10-32 Hazeley to Campbell
3 31-10-36 W. Hamilton - Waterloo Case Book.
4 15-5-33 Letter Book

Many wicked apprentices, like Henry Bower, would sell all their suits of clothing and then would falsely accuse their masters of not having provided clothing for them.[1] Thus just as there were many wicked masters owning apprentices, so also were there blackmailers and truants among the apprentices.

From a scrutiny of the apprentice Book for Waterloo in 1827, one can discover many irregularities even in the mere process of registering apprentices. In the first place, not all the columns provided in the register were filled in. For example, important columns like the "Residence of the Master", or the "Trade that was to be learnt by the apprentice", or the "Age of the apprentice" were all left blank. Furthermore, in spite of the differences in the ages of individual apprentices at the time of the signing of the indenture, all were bound to serve a flat period of seven years apprenticeship. It was only after 1830 that apprentices of 14 years and above were given less than seven years indentured service at Waterloo. From 1st January 1836 the column of "Residence of Master" started to be filled in; but then the names of the apprentices, the dates of their indentures, their ages, the number of apprentices taken, were all generally dropped off.[2]

1 7-11-36 Waterloo Letter Book

2 2nd. Eastern District Manager's Book 1827-1836

Many Liberated Africans were apprenticed inspite of the defects of the System. By December 1832 it was reported that there were about 4,700 indentured Liberated African apprentices with periods of service ranging from three to seven years.[1] From 1st January 1827 to 2nd August of the same year 872 apprentices on indenture were given out.[2] Out of a cargo of 1,630 Captured Negroes received into the Colony between 1st July and 31st December, 1835, 174 were apprenticed in Freetown.[3] Out of another batch of 1,063 Captured Negroes Landed from 1st July to 31st December 1833, 119 were apprenticed.[4] In the period 1st January to 30th June 1833, 170 out of 582 emancipated Africans were apprenticed.[5] The 1840's was a period of retrenchment in the British Government's financial commitments in Sierra Leone. Retrenchment was also carried on in the Liberated African Department. A policy of wide spread and indiscriminate apprenticing of Liberated Africans started. The Government saw in apprenticing a gainful method of effecting retrenchment, for each apprentice then brought an extra twenty shillings into the funds.[6] In this wide scale apprenticing not even school children were

1 15-5-33 Letter Book
2 Ricketts to Hay Letter Book 31-1-29
3 Miscellaneous Return Book 1834-1838, Page 165
4 Miscellaneous Return 1826-34, Page 376
5 Miscellaneous Return 1826-34 Pages 331-332
6 21-5-45 Letter Book

spared and it was only in 1848 that the apprenticing of Liberated African children was officially suspended.[1]

Liberated African apprentices served in many capacities. Some were apprenticed on board H. M. Vessels or on board private vessels to learn naval or maritime trades; others were indentured to private individuals or to marchants as servants or as labourers; a large number was apprenticed to skilful tradesmen of the Colony and an appreciable number was indentured to timber workers in the neighbourhood of the Colony. To supervise such a scattered body efficiently, was really a job in itself. But for the abuses of the apprenticeship system, apprenticing on the whole was a well meaning and rewarding method of providing temporary location for the Newly Arrived Liberated Africans. For the system aimed at promoting industry and self-reliance in the Liberated Africans by making each apprentice either learn one trade or work for a fair wage with which he could start a self-supporting life when later on located.

1 1-3-45 Letter Book: 10-6-48, Despatch No. 185 Grey to Officer Administering the Government.

C H A P T E R III

THE WORK OF THE LIBERATED AFRICAN DEPARTMENT

"THIS MOST COMPLICATED DEPARTMENT..."

In the final analysis, a history of the Liberated African Settlements in the Colony of Sierra Leone during the first half of the 19th century entails a study of the evolution and workings of the Liberated African Department, a department, the origin of which is rather fascinating.

In the first few years of the landing of slavers with their human cargo in Freetown, it was the responsibility of the Collector or Chief Officer of Customs to receive, protect, and provide for the Captured Negroes. The Collector was to keep a register showing

> "An exact list of all the negroes, specifing the time of their delivery; the ship in which they were seized; the date of their condemnation, and by what court, and for what cause and to what suit; and also the following description - the name of each negro, with sex and apparent age....."

He was also to ascertain the number of such negroes fit to be enlisted in the Military and Naval Forces: and he was authorized to

> "bind all such negroes as shall not be received into His Majesty's Services, as apprentices... to prudent and humane masters and mistresses, either in the same or other colonies, to learn such trades, handicrafts or employments as they may seem most fit for, or most likely to gain their livelihood by, when their apprenticeship shall expire."

The Collector of Customs was to prepare an annual report on all proceedings involved in the execution of this order. If an apprentice were indented, then the name and address of his master or mistress, together with an account of the condition of each apprentice were to be received.[1] Thus the first officer, on whom fell the responsibility of providing for the Recaptives was the Chief Officer of Customs, and this was the beginning of what subsequently became a full-fledged department.

In the proposed changes, in the Civil Administration of the Colony of Sierra Leone, suggested by the Commission on the state of the Settlements in West Africa in 1810, the second member of council was to take care of the Captured Negroes. He was to superintend the running of the Liberated African Department; to see that the accounts of the Department were regularly scrutinized by the Governor; to be able to account for the condition, disposal, and health of the Liberated Africans; to present a weekly report of the expenses of their maintenance.[2] It is noteworthy that by this recommendation the Collector of Customs was relieved of the duty of providing for the welfare of the Recaptives, and that a new officer, not occupying any other Government office

1 R.R.Kuczynski Page 112 ff; Order of Council 16th March 1808, J.J.Crooks Chapter VI

2 S. O. S. Despatches 1808-1812

was appointed instead.[1] From this recommendation we also learn that a department named the Liberated African Department had been formed to manage the affairs of the Recaptives.

While therefore we can ascribe the origin of the office of Superintendent of Captured Negroes to the recommendation of the above mentioned commission the institution of the Liberated African Department, however, should be assigned to some other previous despatch. In 1811 in a despatch from the Secretary of State to Governor Maxwell we learn that a separate vote was granted for the subsistence of the Captured Negroes.[2] From this we may conclude that a separate department or office entrusted with the affairs of the Captured Negroes had either been established or that its establishment was being meditated. From 1820 it is certain that an office had been formed for the affairs of the Captured Negroes,[3] for letters were being sent from the office of Captured Negroes to the superintendents of the various villages. Between March 1821 and August 1822 there must have been a change in the name of the office dealing with Captured Negroes for a circular from that office was headed "Office of Liberated African Department."[4] From that date onwards

1 This was one major step in the development of the Liberated African Department.

2. 30th November, 1811

3 Liberated African Department Letter Book 1

4 15-8-1822

the office came to be known as the Liberated African Department.

Starting with just one officer to take care of the Captured Negroes in 1808, the Liberated African Department when at its zenith consisted of a long list of officers.[1] The composition of the Liberated African Department in number varied from time to time. Inspite of the numerical fluctuation, the Liberated African Department always had a few permanent offices like the General Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, a Surgeon, an Office Clerk and Village Superintendents and a few office messengers. In September 1829 the office staff of the Liberated African Department consisted only of two individuals; the Assistant Superintendent and one writer.[2] In 1826 the staff list contained in all 27 officers.[3] The 27 officers included the Chief Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, three writers, a store keeper, an Issuer of provisions, two Office Messengers, and the Superintendents, Medical attendants, Sub-managers, School Masters and Mistresses, an Inspector of Public Buildings, and a Medical Attendant at the Gambia. In 1830 the Office Staff comprised an Assistant Superintendent, a Chief Clerk, a First Writer, a Second Writer and a Third Writer.[4] In 1835 there was a considerable increase in the number of staff

1 Staff Return of the Liberated Department 13th May 1830
2 18-9-29 Letter Book
3 L. A. D. Miscellaneous Return Book 1826-1834
4 2-2-31 Letter Book

officers, for in the office alone there were two Assistant Superintendents, four Writers, two Junior Writers and two Office Messengers.[1] From Liberated African Abstract - from Returns dated 30th June 1835, besides the Chief Clerk there were three other Writers on the office staff.[2] In a despatch from Lord Bathurst to Major General Turner, approval was given for the appointment of a Fourth, a Fifth and a Sixth Writer on the Liberated African Establishment.[3]

From 1828 onwards, the officer administering the Government was to retain the office of General Superintendent of Liberated Africans.[4] Further retrenchment of staff in the Liberated African Department was effected by the end of 1834, for the Assistant Superintendent was to take up additional duties. He was to become the Cashier and Store-keeper, and Cashier and Store Accountant of the Department.[5] Following this policy of retrenchment in the Liberated African Department, orders came from Lord Stanley in 1843 authorizing the dismissal of the Assistant Superintendent of Liberated Africans and the clerks of his Department. The

1 Liberated African Returns 30-6-1835
2 30-6-1833 Despatch from Governor to S. O. S.
3 8-4-1826 Secretary of State - Despatches
4 21-6-1828: 30-9-1828 Secretary of State - Despatches
5 30-9-1834 - Rice to Officer administering the government

duties of the Assistant Superintendent were to be once more flung back at the Collector of Customs, "The officer who in all other colonies is specially delegated by the Board of Treasury to take care of Captured Africans." The staff of the Liberated African Department in the villages was likewise to be reduced for the Colonial Secretary was at a loss to understand why "the crowds of petty functionaries of various denominations, who are attached to each village" should continue to be employed.[1]

In 1841, 306 slaves were condemned; in 1842, 440 were condemned. It appeared that the number of Recaptives brought into the Colony was on the decline. Consequently in 1843 a drastic retrenchment in the Liberated African Department was ordered by Lord Stanley. Retrenchment was to be carried out

> "to the lowest point consistent with the maintenance of order and promotion of education among those Liberated Africans already settled in the Colony, and with the provision of means for the reception and disposal of the limited number likely to be received for the future."

To expedite this retrenchment, Liberated Africans were to be encouraged to emigrate to the West Indies as it was believed

1 5-6-43 Stanley to Governor Macdonald

that that would lessen the numbers even of those Liberated Africans already settled. Moreover, as the numbers of Recaptives brought into Sierra Leone since 1840 averaged some 500 annually, as compared with some 4,000 annual average in years before 1840, there was therefore, argued Lord Stanley, no need for the Liberated African Department to carry its old complement of staff. The supply of stores was to be reduced by one half and if possible further reduced "to the amount necessary for about 500 persons."[1]

By 1843 the Liberated African Department was costing the British Government £12,000 per annum to run. This was £1,000 more than the running cost in 1827.[2] In effecting reduction in the Department the post of Assistant Superintendent of Liberated Africans was abolished and the Collector of Customs took over the care of the Recaptives. New arrivals of Liberated Africans were either to emigrate to the West Indies or to be responsible for themselves; only children under 12 were to be provided for in schools. Responsibility for the remaining managers and constables was transferred to the Colonial Government. In 1844 Kissy Hospital became

1 5-6-43 S. O. S. Despatch

2 21-9-27 Letter Book

a Colonial Hospital. Thus the Department was gradually winding up. But this was a false alarm. In 1844 and 1845, 2,327 and 3,221 slaves were landed in Freetown. So although much reduced in staff and function, the Liberated African Department was still employed. After 1845, Children between 12 and 15 were apprenticed and women were married to respectable men. Thus as if by design, the Liberated African Department which in about 1810 had started with a single staff member, came to its peak form in the 1830's when it was a "most complicated Department,"[1] and finally receded to its original size, an almost one man office. It is the workings of this, rather "Chameleon" like department that we shall now devote our attention to.

In spite of successive retrenchment, the Liberated African Department continued to function until the 1890's. The Government had failed to dispose of fresh arrivals of Liberated Africans through a West Indian Emigration scheme. All adults and children above 12 years who refused to emigrate were for a time in the 1840's thrown on their own resources. But as this ultimately meant for many Liberated Africans, exposure to evils like re-enslavement and prostitution, the British Government, reluctantly, had to intervene and thereby undertook once more responsibility which it had tried to shelve

1 3-11-38 Letter Book.

By 1882, the Liberated African Department was only responsible for the payment of a few pensions to aged Recaptives, the salary of a clerk and the maintenance of Liberated African Children at the Charlotte School. In 1891 the Liberated African Department was finally dissolved: Charlotte School was closed down, and sick Recaptives were henceforth to be maintained from Colonial revenue and pauper Recaptives were pensioned at the rate of two pence a day per head for life.[1]

As suggested by its name, the Liberated African Department was entrusted with the responsibility of providing for, and taking care of the Recaptives. In the first few years of its origin it was merely a miniature office attached to the Civil Establishment of the Colony. Gradually, as the number of landed Recaptives increased so did it become expedient for the office of Captured Negroes to expand. It is this entended office that eventually developed into a full-fledged independent department of state, charged with the welfare of the Liberated Africans.

This duty of catering for the welfare of the Liberated Africans was a manifold responsibility that included the provisions of board, lodge and clothing to the unemancipated Recaptives, and also it included the location and administration of those emancipated.

1 C. Fyfe Page 499 ff

The arrival of a slave ship in Freetown harbour marked the beginning of a new chain of duties for the Liberated African Department. The Assistant Superintendent boards the ship, registers the Recaptives, distinguishing adults from children, and provides them with clothing before they are landed. Before Governor Campbell's time the Re-Captives were landed, naked, males as well as females.[1] If there are any sick among the cargo, they are immediately sent to hospital. A daily account called "Daily State" is presented of the condition of the Recaptives in the King's Yard and in the Hospital separately on distinct forms headed 'Pending Adjudication.' This Daily State shows all contingencies, for the Captors are charged with all expences incurred in the superintendence of the Recaptives prior to adjudication. For every 25 Captured Africans, a temporary overseer is appointed to attend to their comfort, cleanliness, order and distribution in messing. The Daily State is prepared by the Clerk of the Month, and when it is approved, issuing tickets are made out to specify the quantity of provision which the contractor has to supply the Liberated African Department.[2] After adjudication the Liberated Africans are registered in the books of the Liberated African Department and the Mixed Commissions Court.

1 Addresses, Petitions etc from the Kings and Chiefs of the Sudan and the Inhabitants of Sierra Leone to King George Fourth and Governor D. H. Campbell. 1837

2 14-8-43

It is then time for the disposal of the Recaptives.[1]

The Daily Routine of the Liberated African Department included the preparation of monthly returns of Liberated Africans, the preparation of requisitions, cash vouchers, Store Abstracts, Abstracts of persons on allowances; the making of pay lists and monthly distributions; the writing of correspondences, to the different managers, to the Governor, to the Colonial Secretary, to the Colonial Surveyor, to the Commissiariat and other departments in the Colony; and the much more important communications, to the Secretary of State, in which the Quarterly, Half-yearly and Annual Returns of the progress of the Liberated Africans were submitted.[2]

Besides these clerical duties, it was also the responsibility of the department to administer the Liberated African settlements in the Colony villages. As the nearest of the first few settlements was about five miles from Freetown it was necessary to appoint superintendents who would execute the directions of the department in the various villages. In each settlement eventually, there grew up a team of officers consisting of a superintendent, a designation which was later on changed to Manager, a number of overseers, a school master or mistress, constables and at times a goaler. Each village

1 14-8-1843 Terry to Macdonald, Letter Book

2 14-8-43

was intended to constitute a separate and independent township, free to manage its own affairs, and subject only to the directions of the Liberated African Department. The village administration was therefore a local division of the Central Department.

As the managers were the direct representatives of the Chief Superintendent or General Superintendent of Liberated Africans, they were endowed with enormous powers. As local Magistrates they held the highest judicial powers and as Ministers of Religion they were the shepherd of the flock that was entrusted in their care. The Liberated African Department utilized the services of the C. M. S. Missionaries who acted as managers and sub managers in many of the Liberated African Settlements. This was due to the fact that there was a shortage of lay officers at the disposal of the Department. To ascertain that the managers conformed with the Department's directives about policy, the Assistant Superintendent would also listen to complaints that might be brought before him by the villagers against their managers. We shall however defer a detailed treatment of the work of the Manager to a later chapter. Suffice it to say that the managers were the sinews of Liberated African Administration. The disposal of the Recaptives, after adjudication was the work of the Liberated African Department. Strictly speaking the Department was

expected to record the manner of disposal of each Liberated African, and also to be able to give an account of the condition or state of those located.[1] In practice, however, the department did not conform with these detailed regulations concerning the registration of Liberated Africans. There were far too few hands in the office, with at times just one writer, to cope with the amount of clerical work that was involved.

This shortage of staff in the department contributed to its inefficiency. For instance, Mr. A. Diaper who was first secretary in the Liberated African Department used to work from six o'clock in the morning until ten p.m. or twelve midnight "and upon some occasions as late as two to three and four O'clock the next morning;" even Sundays were no holidays.[2] The duties of the clerks in the department were manifold. The clerks could even be sent on missions to the Chiefs of the adjacent countries.[3]

In 1833 with a staff of five persons including the Assistant Superintendent, each officer was assigned to some specific function. Mr. C. B. Jones, the then Chief Clerk was to be the cashier responsible for receiving periodic returns of accounts and vouchers from the managers: he was also to be the custodian of all account books. Mr. Joseph De. Graft who

1 Liberated African Department Register of Liberated Africans No. 1

2 8-3-1837 - A. Diaper to Lord Glenelg

3 30-10-39 C.B.Jones to Lord John Russel: 28-7-30: Thomas Cole to D.V.Hamilton Letter Book

was First Writer was to be in charge of the census and returns of population of the Liberated African Villages and was to prepare reports on the Liberated Africans. Mr. W.H.W.Graham, the Second Writer was to assist in copying all vouchers, letters, returns and to record new arrivals of Liberated Africans, and to be responsible for the Liberated Africans in Freetown. The Third Writer, Mr. Simon Smith was to take charge of the registers, of the newly imported, of apprentices, Letter Books and Indentures.[1] In addition to all these specific duties, the officers of the Liberated African Department were to be prepared to undertake extra responsibilities from time to time.

But besides staff shortage, indifference to work was also a contributory factor to inefficiency in the Liberated African Department. It was revealed that Mr. Terry, the Assistant Superintendent of Liberated Africans had on 18th July refused to register the captured Negroes who were brought to him by the Acting Adjutant, on the pretext that it was too late at night, when it was "only about a quarter before 3.p.m."[2] Incidentally, Mr. Terry had been suspended from the office of Assistant Superintendent on 24th December, 1839 following the report of a commission on the affairs of the department.[3]

1 28-2-1833 Letter Book

2 6-9-42 Stanley to Governor Macdonald

3 24-12-39 - Russel to Governor Doherty

Many individuals who were employed by the Liberated African Department were holders of other offices either in the Civil Establishment or in the Military Department. On the retirement of Mr. Campbell from the office of Assistant Superintendent Mr. Slater, the Agent Victualler of the Royal Navy was appointed to succeed Mr. Campbell.[1] Fortunately, however, in this case Slater's appointment was objected to by Lord Aberdeen.[2] These pluralists could not possibly devote their full attention and service to a work that for them was of a secondary and part-time character. When Sir Neil Campbell took up the administration in 1826 he could not help but confess to Lord Bathurst that "All duties Civil and Military have been conducted with such extraordinary deviation from custom since the death of Major-General Turner...."[3]

Campbell was so struck by the solvenly attitude of Military officers to their civil duties that he suggested to the Secretary of State that Military officers who held acting appointments in the Civil Establishment should secure less than what they had been formerly paid. On many occasions the Military Surgeon was also the Medical officer attached to the Liberated African Department; and as his military duties were given priority, his services to the Liberated African Department were only performed after the military duties had

1 30-9-34 Rice to Officer Administering the Government of Sierra Leone

2 12-2-35 Aberdeen to Lieutenent Governor Campbell

3 No. 17. September, 1826 Neil Campbell to Lord Bathurst

been discharged.[1] However, reliance on the part-time services of Military Officers in the execution of civil duties was about the best bet in a bad bargain. For in a climate notorious for its unsuitability to European life, there were few qualified men, available for work in the Colony. Moreover, as the Liberated African Department offered far less pay than what was given out by private merchants to their employees, recruitment of suitable and adequate numbers of staff into the Liberated African Department was a difficult problem. Individuals even preferred to work in the Secretary's office where they would receive more pay than what they would get in the Liberated African Department. The salary of the Chief Clerk in the Liberated African Department in 1839 was equal to that of the third writer in the Secretary's Office, although the Chief Clerk's responsibilities were greater and his duties ten fold. The Chief Clerk's salary was then £250 per annum.[2] As early as 1810, if not earlier, resignation of officers from the Liberated African Department had started because of inadequate pay. Dr. Higgins resigned his office as First Surgeon of the Colony mainly because of this.[3] Mr. Stormouth, the Chief Surgeon in 1816, applied for an increase of salary

1 1-8-28 Murray to Denham
2 30-10-39 C.B. Jone to Lord John Russel
3 30-12-1810 S. O. S. Despatch

soon after he had been appointed to the situation.[1] As the British Government was bent on curtailling expenditure on the Liberated African Department, salary increases were therefore a hard fought battle in which more often than not the employee was the loser. Mr. Aitkin's plea for extra allowance for duties performed at Kissy Hospital was turned down.[2] When Mr. Thorpe, Manager of Waterloo applied for an increase of salary he received the following reply: "If you are not content with the salary you have, you may go about your business."[3] In April 1829 three out of six officers left the Liberated Africans Department to seek better pay elsewhere. Mr. Jones who had risen to be first writer with a salary of £200 per annum left in September to be a clerk of the Police; Charles Brown, a clerk in the office left in consequence of the offer of a higher salary from a Merchant of the Colony: and so did R. Bonard, Sub-Manager of Mountain leave the Department to join a Merchant's service.[4] Even Thomas Cole the Assistant Superintendent was quick to petition the Secretary of State that he be confirmed in the appointment of Registrar of the Mixed Commission Courts, following the death of the late Registrar Mr. Joseph Reffell.

1 19-6-1816 S. O. S. Despatch

2 1-2-37 Glenelg to officer administering the Government of Sierra Leone

3 14-8-32 Letter Book - F. Campbell to John Thorpe

4 Alternations in the Staff of the Liberated Africans Department and new arrangements since 1st April 1829 - Governor's Despatch - 1928-1829

Cole had served the Liberated African Department continuously for eleven years.[1] So meagre was the general state of salaries of the officers of the Liberated Africans Department that Governor Alex Findlay admitted the salary of £75 per annum paid to Mr. D. V. Hamilton, a writer in the Department was "so small an amount to procure permanently, the services of a fit person to fill his situation."[2] What Findlay said about Hamilton's case, applied equally well to the other officers: they were all paid meagre salaries. Indeed, Governor Findlay even proposed a new and higher salary scale for all the office staff of the Liberated African Department. The Assistant Superintendent who formerly had been on a salary of £450 was now to receive £600 per annum; the Chief Clerk was to have £100 increase on his former £200 per annum; the Second Writer who had only been paid £75 was to receive £150 per annum; and the Third Writer had an increase of £25 to his former £75 salary per annum.[3] Findlay's suggestions were not wholly accepted by the Secretary of State.[4]

Besides being dissatisfied about their pay, the officers of the Liberated African Department were expected to be men of exemplary character; men who were not only to refrain from

1 14-7-29 T. Cole to Government. Henry John Riketts - Governor's Despatch
2 2-2-31 Letter Book
3 Miscellaneous Return Book - 1826-1834: Letter Book 2-2-31
4 5-3-32 Hay to Findlay

participating in private trade, but were also to be very selective in their association with other men. For example Mr. D. V. Hamilton, a writer in the Department was suspended not so much because of his inefficiency as because of his association with a gang of gamblers.[1] In its policy of trying to enforce regid discipline on officers, the Government at times went to ridiculous extremes like ordering that officers should not smoke during day time while in the streets of Freetown, lest they lower the status of public servants in the eyes of the people.[2] Due to inadequate pay many officers of the Liberated African Department, from the Assistant Superintendent right down to the managers in the villages, only held appointments in the Department until such time that they could fill a favourable vacancy some wherelse.[3] For example Captain Clarke, Manager of the two Mountain Districts, in February 1842 was only serving the Department temporarily. Many instances are reported of officers either misappropriating funds or defrauding Liberated Africans of their rations of money. Although such actions of fraud cannot be justified in any way, yet we should not be far too wrong in attributing the cause of their fraudlent behaviour to low wages. In a despatch dated 24th December, 1839 from Lord John Russell to Governor

1 24-1-31 T. Cole to Governor Findlay
2 27-9-36 - Circular from the Governor
3 15-2-42 Letter Book

Doherty, approval was given for the dismissal of Mr. C. B. Jones and the suspension of Mr. Terry from the Liberated African Department. Mr. Jones was charged with misappropriating indentured fee to the amount of £164; and Mr. Terry's charge was that he was in the habit of "Advancing to himself from the general chest, certain sums of money before it is due, for his own private use, and being in debt thereto, after signing the pay list for his Quarterly Account of Salary"[1] Officially, the Assistant Superintendent could not disburse moneys without the Governor's approval. It is therefore strange to learn that Mr. Terry was habitually advancing himself money from the general chest without the Governor's knowledge.

So also were the Managers and Sub-managers prone to commit acts of fraud. Mr. Harding, Assistant Manager of the Mountain District had misappropriated sums of money. At Charlotte, Mr. Harding embezzled a collection of money intended for the completion of the village Church building, and in Bathurst, Charlotte and in a part of Gloucester, he had exacted fees ranging from one penny to three pence from various house holders for printing house numbers on their doors. These fees, Harding also used for his own benefit.[2] Mr. P. Wilson, Assistant Manager of Goderich was charged of defrauding a "number of people lately arrived from Fernando Po of the greater portion of their allowance..."[3]

1 24-12-39 Russell to Doherty
2 25-1-35 Campbell to Governor Findlay Letter Book
3 8-10-33 F. Campbell to Acting Governor Melville, Letter Book

Even Overseers had their own way of cheating. Benjamin Hobhouse, an overseer of Rokell was accused of illegally disposing of boards belonging to the Department.[1]

Thus we can continue to multiply cases of fraud in which officers and employees of the Liberated African Department were involved. As I said earlier, it is not our intention to justify these fraudlent actions. Nevertheless the pay that was offered these men, surely was inadequate, and therefore was a contributing factor to their misdemeanour. In the 1830 Manager's salaries ranged from £200 to £250; Sub-managers received between £75 and £150 per annum, an overseer was paid 50 shillings per month; a constable earned 20 shillings and so did the Goaler and dresser earn about 20 shillings each per month. Even school Masters and Mistresses were put on low wages. A £3 monthly salary, as that paid Mrs. Neville at Hastings in 1840, was an exceptional case, for teachers salaries ranged between 15s. and 40s. a month in the 1840's; while Assistant teachers earned as low as 6s.4d per month as George Mortimer was earning at Kent.[2]

1 13-3-1837 C. B. Jones to J. Doherty - Letter Book

2 Russell R.B. 1826-1834- Page 94. 1-7-38 Letter Book
Governor's despatch to S. O. S. No. 49, 4-10-1840

Terry: Wilkin George Terry was appointed Assistant Superintendent of Liberated Africans on 28th June 1836. Letter Book

Mr. Jones: Charles Jones, Manager and Accountant of Western District - 27th July 1838 - Letter Book

If we agree that staff salaries of Liberated African Department officers were low then we cannot help but conclude that the wages of African and coloured employees were even lower. The Governor's monthly horse allowance was far more than what any school master or mistress received as wages for the same period. Indeed while Governor H.D. Campbell, who was also General Superintendent of Liberated Africans, was granted 7s.6d. daily allowance for the upkeep of two horses, exclusive of his fixed annual income of £2,000, his office messenger was only allowed a pitance of £9 annual salary - a bare fifteen shillings wage per month.[1] This iniquitously uneven salary structure had come as a result of a definite policy of the British Government a policy which was directed towards rewarding British officers serving in Sierra Leone for the injury their health would sustain in living in an unhealthy climate. That the climate in Sierra Leone was unhealthy goes without any comments. But it was equally unhealthy both for Blacks as well as for Whites. The compensation of a high salary, offered to European employees for the risk they ran in staying in this unhealthy climate, a climate that was as favourable to health as that in the West Indies, according to Mr. Neil Campbell's firm convictions, was disproportionate to the risk.[2]

1 Liberated African Returns 30-6-1835. Salaries of Liberated African Department - Governor's Despatch

2 Campbell to Earl Bathurst, Despatch No. 17, September 1826

One cannot therefore justify the British Government's policy of offering handsome salaries to European officers solely on the ground that they were running a risk in coming out to West Africa. A more convincing explanation must be found elsewhere.

As early as 1810, the Commissioners who were asked to report on the State of the settlements on the West Coast of Africa, although they agreed that the cost of living in Sierra Leone was higher both for Europeans as well as Africans - "so very dear is every article whether Native or European" - and that the salaries paid were insufficient for an economical daily maintenance, yet they were only advocating salary increase for the advantage of the European staff. For all the top grade appointments were to be reserved for Europeans only - "For however desirable it may be to bring forward Black and coloured young men of merit, yet it would be extremely injudicious to advance them to the higher situations in the Colony. Neither the general cultivation of their minds, nor the Public opinion would authorize such a step."[1] It is very doubtful whether it was the intention of the commissioners that Africans and men of colour should have been elevated. If any just statement could be made about this Commission's Report, that statement ought to be that it was very discriminatory to

1 S.O.S. Despatch. 1808-1812. The report of the Commission 1810

Africans and Coloured people in its recommendations on salaries. For while they accepted that salaries of Government officers were low, yet they felt that the African could put up with a lower salary scale than the European. Three hundred pounds per annum was considered an ample amount for an African who did the same job, which if performed by a European, was to carry £500. "If these offices are held by Natives, then £300 a year would be ample."

The Commissioners tried to justify their recommendation of offering higher salaries to European than Africans on the ground that European officers in West Africa must be placed in a respectable situation by their earning handsome salaries. "If the improvement of Africa be really an object of importance, the Colony which we establish as the focus from whence this benefit is to emanate, must be rendered respectable in the eyes of the Natives - and this can be only done by having its duties performed in an official manner by persons whose salaries enable them to live as becomes their situation."[1] This was therefore the key to the policy of under-paying the African. The European master should be paid more to enable him to Lord it over his Coloured Subjects.

In despatch No. 21 of 8th September, 1826 Sir Neil Campbell confessed to Earl Bathurst that although Messrs Brown and Libert were in reality managing Kissy Hospital as "the army duties are quite enough for the medical officers" yet these men had no possible room for advancement in the

1 1810 Commission's Report

medical service. He therefore suggested that appointments of Assistants in the Pharmacy, should be made to encourage persons of colour, who were natives of the Colony, to aspire to the appointment of Colonial Surgeon. Campbell observed that in the past no provision had been made to create openings in "any of the public offices" for the advancement of the African; instead, that two or three acting appointments had been given to one European and all of them had been neglected. To the credit of Sir Neil Campbell goes the initiation of a policy of bringing forward Africans of merit to occupy high posts in the Civil Establishment; for Campbell requested Earl Bathurst to confer the titles of 1st and 2nd Assistant Colonial Surgeon on Messrs Brown and Libert who would be on newly raised salaries of £100, and £75 respectively. Moreover, provision was made for the Coloured assistants to the Colonial Surgeon to rise to the post of Colonial Surgeon. This was not the only field in which Sir Neil Campbell tried to lift up men of colour to fill responsible posts, hitherto, the preserve of Europeans. In January 1827 Campbell had ordered the C.M.S. Teachers in the Villages to be superseded by persons of colour. This was not merely the beginning of the control of the settlements by managers wholly responsible to the Liberated African Department and not owing dual loyalty, partly to the C. M. Society and partly to the Department, but it also created

a wide sphere of advancement for Coloured people.[1] It does not appear that Sir Neil Campbell's example was followed by his successors; for in October 1829 a number of Coloured people, grieved by the discriminatory policy pursued by the Government in its appointments of officers as well as in appointing Counsellors, dispatched a memorandum to S.G.Murray. In the memorandum, inter alia, the Coloured people stated

> "That having for many years with depressed feelings, viewed the undeviating system, pursued by His Majesty's Government, of filling all offices of any importance, and respectability, solely with Europeans..."

although such favoured Europeans "can lay claim to no extraordinary merit, and are invariable persons who possess no local ties in the country.."; on these grounds the Memoralists were asking that "they would at some no distant period, be permitted to participate in those favours, so exclusively bestowed on their European, British fellow subjects."[2]

Mr. Walter W. Lewis, the Colonial Secretary in endeavouring to exhonorate the British Government of the charge levied against it by the Coloured people made the following comments about the memoralists: first, that no Coloured person of merit had been neglected in Government appointments; secondly that only two of the memoralists, Mr. W.H.Savage and Mr. James Wise were educated to some extent, that their main spokesman

1 Church Mission in Sierra Leone - Page 274 ff

2 22-10-1829 - The Memorial of certain free-holders

Mr. Gabbidon "Is deficient of the common rudiments of education" and that "the social intercourse between Europeans and men of colour which existed in the time of the late Sir Charles MacCarthy, and which the memoralists now represent the want of, as a grievance, I submit, is only to be overcome by good conduct on their part."[1]

We should only take this excuse of Mr. W.W.Lewis, himself, a European, with a grain of salt. For it is hard to believe that a man who was dificient of the common rudiments of education like Mr. Gabbidon was supposed to have been should have been made a Justice of the Peace or Mayor. And if all the other Memoralists except Wise and Savage were uneducated then how difficult should it have been to perform justice in a country where the Police Magistrate was uneducated: for T. H. Parker, one of the Memoralists had been Police Magistrate and joint Commissioner of apprisement and sale in the Mixed Commission Court.[2] Moreover, that the Coloured people were generally of bad conduct is not borne out by any evidence. At least, although most of the Memoralists had one time or the other been in Government sercices, which the majority of them had been forced to leave, yet none of them had ever been dismissed from services for bad conduct. The only Memoralist who was dismissed from Government service was one

1 8-11-1829 -W.W.Lewis to R.W.Hay

2 22-10-1829 Enclosure No. 2

I. L. Morgan, a Maroon who was discharged from the employ of the Colonial Engineer Department for neglect of duty in 1828.[1] To discriminate against men of colour because of their bad conduct was only a pretext trumped up by Mr. W.W.Lewis to justify his Government's policy.

From Enclosure 3 of the same despatch, containing Returns of the various classes of people employed by the Government in Sierra Leone in 1829, it becomes very obvious that Coloured people were placed in less responsible and less remunerative posts while European were raised up to the highest offices. In 1829 out of 13 vacant posts ranging from Colonial Secretary to Town Superintendent; only one was filled by an African, a George Nicol, as acting writer; one Maroon, S. Libert was employed as Town Superintendent; while the rest of the vacancies fell to Europeans and West Indians.[2] Indeed even among the ranks of the coloured elements there was a ting of stratification; for the Maroons, Nova Scotians and West Indians were employed in posts of a higher status and pay than the Liberated Africans. Nevertheless, while the best paid Coloured fellow earned £200 per annum, like D.Wilson, a writer clerk in the Registry of Mixed Commissions and the least paid only received £12 per annum, like I. Neizer, an apprentice in the Printing Office; on the other hand the least paid

1 Enclosure No. 2

2 Enclosure 4, accompanying despatch of 22-10-1829

European got £50 per annum and highest paid, the Commissionary Judge was given the handsome salary of £3,000 per annum.[1]

The only possible explanation we can give to the unequal treatment meted out to coloured employees of the Government can be found in the already cited report of the 1810 Commission; namely, that the Coloured mind was inferior to that of the European and moreover that the Whiteman needed enough money to enable him to enjoy a higher standard of living which would be the envy of his Black Subjects. Unfortunately it was also generally held that the African could live conveniently on two pence a day. This belief more than anything else might have induced the British Government to assume that a daily allowance of three pence per head was enough to procure food for the Liberated Africans. "There is no danger of anyone starving in this Country," wrote Governor Turner, "as two pence pays for their daily food, rice and palm oil."[2] Nothing is as contradictory as this. For how could the cost of living be high both for Europeans as well as for Africans, as was stated by the Commissioners of 1810, "So very dear is every article whether Native or European," and further endorsed by Governor Sir Charles Turner who declared in 1825 that "money has lost its value, as proved by the prices of the necessaries of life" in the Colony, and yet at the same time

1 22-10-29

2 J. J. Crooks Page 118

it could convincingly be stated that two pence or three pence was enough to feed the African? The African was not living but slowly dying on his supposed adequate allowance of three pence a day.[1] I shall, however defer a fuller treatment of allowances of Liberated Africans to a later chapter.

Despite the disadvantages suffered by the African employees of the Liberated African Department, nevertheless they were a vital link in the Department's administration. In the villages, the Government Superintendents or Managers relied heavily on the work of their African Overseers and Constables for the orderly running of the Settlements. As the Overseers and Constables were the heads of the various tribes that were represented in each village, and under each overseer was a number of families, the Manager's work was thus lightened by these Overseers, who had a better understanding of the Liberated Africans than the Managers, not only because they could speak the same language, but also because, as they were of the same tribe, they could be much more competent judges of issues that had tribal affectations. But for this ingenious device of administering the Settlements of the Liberated Africans on tribal basis, it is doubtful whether the Liberated African Department would have had any success in its work.[2]

1 J. J. Crooks Page 118 ff

2 30-6-29 Ricketts to Murray

It is an accepted fact that the Liberated African Department was in many ways run on inefficient lines. In the first place there was hardly any continuity of policy in the Department. Each Governor decided on his own best method of managing the Department. And because there were frequent successions of Governors and Officers Administering the Colony, hardly had one new policy been established than it was repealed or neutralized by a much newer directive. In the Report of the Madden Commission of the state of the British West African Settlements in 1841, Dr. Madden, in sympathizing with the Governors wrote: "they found great evils and they adopted new plans to meet them, but before they had been completed, their plans died with them."

But this was not the only cause of inefficiency in the Department. Many of the employees including European Missionaries who were employed as Superintendents or Managers were of a poor calibre. "For God's sake", wrote Governor A. Findlay in June 1831, "send us decent Clergymen and Schoolmasters and then you many expect to hear of the African advancing in civilization." Indeed it was due to the misconduct of one of the Managers - a Missionary, in 1831 that the Girl School was removed from Bathurst to Regent.[1] In 1834

1 5-6-31 Goderich to Findlay; J.J. Crooks Page 157 ff

Dr. Boyle who had become a habitual drunkard "to such an extent as totally to incapacitate him from discharging his duties as a Medical Officer" as was revealed by an investigation, was dismissed from the service of the Department.[1] Moreover there were spells during which the Supervision of the Liberated African Department had been little attended to by the Governors, as it happened in the period between Governor Temple's administration and that of Governor Doherty.[2] So little was known about the Liberated African Communities by some Governors of Sierra Leone that Right Honourable R.W.Hay confessed that "Until Colonel Denham went out to the Colony, we knew as much about the Liberated African Villages, as we know about those of the Ashantee Country"[3]

All these shortcomings of the officers were sure to have a desasterous influence on the efficiency of the Liberated African Department. It should not therefore be a surprise to learn that often the Department was queried by the Secretary of States for either some irregularities or delay in its work. Governor A. Findlay's pretext of his being beset with "Multifarious and important duties" was hardly a justifiable reason for the deficient state in which the accounts of the Liberated African Department were sent to England for examination, in 1830.[4] In a letter from Lord

1 24-10-33 Stanley to Governor Temple: 5-10-34 Rice to Officer Administering the Government
2 24-12-39 Russell to Governor Doherty
3 8-8-28 Hay to Lumley
4 4-9-30 Findlay's Report on the Liberated Arricans: 4-10-30 Findlay to Hay

John Russell to the Officer Administering the Government in 1841, it was disclosed that indentured money to the value of £19 had been omitted from the March Quarterly Accounts of the Liberated African Department.[1]

Irregularities in the accounts of the Liberated African Department provided a fruitful source of correspondence with the Secretary of State. Between April 1822 and October 1823, the accounts of the Department for that period had not been sent for auditing. And although a special request was made in 1828 for a submission of those Accounts, no definite action was taken to straighten them until after 1831.[2] There was more in this delay on the part of the Liberated African Department to submit the Accounts in question for auditing than mere tardiness. What was really causing the delay was that the Department could not account for the sum of £231:4:6d which had been advanced to Colonel Chrisholm by the Colonial Accountant on behalf of the Liberated African Department during the period April 1822 to October 1823. Consequently, although a bill of £231:4:6d had been drawn on the Treasury by Colonel Chrisholm on 4th January, 1824, yet there was no such expenditure recorded in the Accounts of the Liberated African Department.

1 30-7-41

2 17-7-28 S.O.S. Despatch. 1-5-31 Hay to Findlay

Before the 1830's fees accuring from indentures had been used for contingent expenses. In 1837, however, Captain A. S. Fraser in a letter to Lord Glenelg, put forward a claim to his own portion of the distributed Fee Fund which had been collected from indentures of Liberated Africans. A.S. Fraser's claim was backed by precedent; namely, that Officers who had administered the Government of Sierra Leone before May 1837 had received their own share of the Fee Fund. Fraser's share was to have been £137.[1] Sometime in the 1830's the practice of appropriating indenture fees to the Governor's private use began.. In a letter from M. L. Melville, the Acting Governor, to E. G. Stanley Principal Secretary of State dated 20th July 1833, Governor Findlay was charged of having taking along with him, when leaving the Colony, a sum of £500 out of the indenture fund which was in the custody of the Assistant Superintendent. This might have been the beginning of a rather inexpedient practice. It was a great pity that valuable sums collected from indentures of Liberated Africans should have been made a common booty of Governors at a time when the Home Government was complaining of financial burden involved in the upkeep of the Liberated Africans. This could be interpreted as not only a fragrant disregard of the sufferings of the Liberated Africans, but also as a deliberate attempt at stifling their progress.

1 24-2-1837 Fraser to Lord Glenelg S.O.S.

One of the main causes of weakness in the working of the Liberated African Department was the rather eratic system of transfering staff members. Mr. Guy Porter, Manager of Kent was transferred to take up the management of the Jail in Freetown in 1833 and as far as Mr. Porter was concerned, this was a promotion for the Jailer's job carried more pay than his former employment. In that same year, 1833, Mr. C. B. Jones Chief Clerk in the Liberated African Department's office was transferred to Waterloo as manager, on 22nd July; then he was transferred to Wellington and then was sent to Kissy as Manager and Medical Attendant on 26th August. Meanwhile, I. B. Hazeley who had been managing Kissy was sent to Wellington to replace Mr. C. B. Jones. Mr. I. L. Lessing, Manager of Banana was removed to York on 22nd July to succeed Mr. W. B. Pratt who had been promoted to the office of Chief Clerk in the Liberated African Department. Mr. Lessing, however, was shortly dismissed from the position of Manager of York for ordering a Liberated African girl Judith Norman of about 14 years to be flogged by the goaler, on 16th May 1834.[1] Mr. F. H. Rankin, at first, one of three fourth Clerks in the Liberated African Department, then became manager of York on 1st September 1834 with a salary of £150, but resigned on 9th December of the same year. Mr. Thomas Parkes, Manager of

1 Letter Book 16-5-34

1st Mountain District was sent to the 2nd Mountain District on 11th October 1833 to supersede Peter Wilson who was transferred to Goderich as Assistant Manager from which post he was dismissed for defrauding a "Number of people lately arrived from Fernado Po of the greater portion of their allowance.." and for his drunkenness.[1] In addition to these transfers of staff member, two other members of the Liberated African Department, Mr. I. De. Graft and Mr. W. Smith, left the Department to take up employment as 2nd Writer on the Civil Establishment and Writer in the Registry of Mixed Commission respectively. Such frequent staff changes could hardly make for efficiency. But the Liberated African Department was not striving at achieving efficiency when their watch word was to " amend our future practice by past experience."[2]

It was not at all times that the Liberated African Department was solely responsible for irregularities and tardiness of action. There were times when the Home Government was actually the cause of the delay in the work of the Department. Before the Department could expend any sums above £100, it had to obtain the prior consent of the Secretary of State. For example, Governor Denham was queried by Lord G. Murray for raising the salary of Mr. Thomas Cole without prior instructions, and not only was Mr. Cole's salary brought back to its former scale, but he was also to be surcharged for the extra amounts he had received.[3] The work of the Department

1. 8-10-33 Letter Book; Miscellaneous Return Book 1826-1834, Pages 381-382
2. 22-9-42 Letter Book. 3. 26-8-1828 Murray to Lumley

as far as it involved the disbursement of money, was rendered very slowly. Even an expenditure of £35 for urgent repairs on the School house at Regent had to be approved by the Secretary of State.[1] In a case like this, delay in carrying on repairs on buildings, frequently resulted in extra expenditure; for many a time buildings would have crumbled down before an approved vote of expenditure was obtained for its repairs from the Secretary of State.

Before the 1840's the Liberated African Department was also responsible for the Recaptives located in the Gambia. As communication between Sierra Leone and the Gambia was not all that much speedy, a delay of the despatch of the Gambia Accounts to Freetown meant a delay in the final despatch of the Liberated African Department's Accounts to the Secretary of State. "In consequence of your not signing and transmitting the proper vouchers sent with the persons alluded to, you have caused great delay in my making up the Store Accounts of the Department for the Quarter ending on the 30th June 1833," wrote F. Campbell to J. W. Smith, the Officer in charge of St. Mary's Settlement, Gambia.[2] There is hardly any more fitting description that can pay tribute to the manifold nature of the work that was done by the Liberated African Department, than that of the acting Superintendent who described the

1 18-11-28 Murray to Ricketts

2 25-6-33 Letter Book

Department as: "This most complicated Department, which I beg leave to observe is the most varied and difficult in the Colony."[1]

1 3-11-38 Letter Book

C H A P T E R IV

THE LIBERATED AFRICAN SETTLEMENTS

After adjudication the bulk of the Liberated Africans was located at first in parts of Freetown and later on in the Villages in the environs of Freetown. The first of the Liberated African Villages, Leicester, about a distance of four miles from Freetown, founded in 1809 and enlarged in the following year, had a batch of Joloofs, Bambarras and Yeolas as its foundation members. Between 1812 and 1814, Kissy, Dassa Town, Regent or Hogbrook, New Town and Portuguese Town had been founded, while the plans for Leopold and Charlotte were being laid out. By 1820 all the Mountain Villages and the majority of the Eastern Villages had been established. Allen's Town, named after the Quaker Mr. William Allen, according to whose plan the Village was built, was established in 1826 while its neighbours Newlands, Campbell Town and Denham were founded in 1827. On the West, Lumley Town was opened in 1828, and Murray Town and Aberdeen in the following year. During Governor D.H.Campbell's administration in 1837, the principal Liberated African Settlements consisted of Waterloo, Allen's Town, Hastings, Wellington, Kissy, Charlotte, Bathurst, Gloucester, Regent, Wilberforce, Congo Town, Murray Town, Aberdeen, Lumley, Goderich, York, Kent and the Banana Islands.[1]

1 Addresses petitions etc. from the Kings and Chiefs of Sudan and the Inhabitants of Sierra Leone to King Geogre Fourth and Governor D.H. Campbell: Miscellaneous Return 1826-1836 Pages 109-110. Church Missions in Sierra Leone-Introcuction. The Story of A Mission - Chapter III: Governor's Despatches to the Secretary of State 11-12-26

The villages can be divided into three main groupings; those located in the Mountain Area, those in the Western side of Freetown and those on the Eastern side. We shall now examine the sites of the three groups of settlements .

What puzzles anyone who visits the Mountain Villages of the Peninsula of Sierra Leone is that the inhabitants have been able to survive the strain involved in trying to eke out a livelihood, mainly through agriculture, among lofty hills and with very crude and primitive implements. Regent, for example, which was once the leading Liberated African Settlement, is built in the valley formed by the slopes of Leicester Peak and Mount Sugar Loaf; and so are Bathurst and Charlotte also pitched at the bottoms on mountain slopes. Leicester and Gloucester are situated at the foot of Leicester Peak. Rev. W.A.B.Johnson, the Superintendent of Captured Negroes at Regent, described the town in 1816 thus: "It is surrounded by high mountains, one rearing its head above another, and all covered with trees and bushes continually green."[1] Thus all the Mountain Villages are encompassed by lofty hills. That such an area should have been the home of the Recaptives who were expected to thrive through agricultural labour was a great pity. This more than any thing else shows that hardly any plans were made to secure suitable locations for the Liberated Africans.

1 Proceedings of C.M.S. 1917-1818.

It did not take Governor Turner any length of time in the Colony to come to the conclusion that the Mountain settlers had the greatest disadvantage to contend with as their efforts were among barren rocks and ungrateful soil. Reporting on the state of Leicester Village the Commission of 1825 stated:

> "The rocky and mountainous nature of the land affords little facility to agriculture, and the proximity of Freetown having offered other modes of procurring a livelihood, no progress has been made in this branch of industry more than might have been accomplished in the first two or three years.."

What was said of Leicester was equally applicable to Gloucester and was to a large extent equally true for the other Mountain Villages.[1]

The Liberated Africans located on the Western side of Freetown were in a much more favourable locality for agricultural pursuits. All these Western Villages are situated along the beaches fringing the Coast of the Peninsula. But even here the Mountain ranges of the Peninsula present a barrier towards an eastern expansion of the Western Villages. Those villages on the eastern side of Freetown are most favourably located. All of them have access to the Rokell River which bounds their Northern side. The farthest of these Eastern Villages, Waterloo, is about 20 miles from Freetown by

1 The Rise of British West Africa-Claude George-Chapter XXIX

road, but a much less distance by river. There is far much more room for cultivation in these villages than in those of the Western Area; for between Kissy, the first of the Eastern Villages and Waterloo, is a continuous stretch of low land, much of which is now cleared and used for buildings, which could have been cultivated. Indeed the only area where large scale farming was undertaken was in the Eastern Villages. At Kissy for example, a Liberated African farmer named Sendawa, got rich through large scale farming.[1] These in brief are the general features of the localities in which Liberated Africans were settled. How they prospered or decayed is what we shall now devote our attention to.

Prior to location the Newly Arrived Liberated Africans were supplied by the Liberated African Department with some cooking utensils and agricultural implements, as well as with two suits of clothing. To every adult Liberated African, that is to all above 14 years, was supplied the following: one mat, one blanket, one Duck Frock, two Duck Kilts, one or two tin plates or wooden bowls, one iron spoon, one tin cup; and one Camp Kettle and one iron pot to a group of four or five men. The male adults received in addition one bill hook, one hoe, one cutlass and one felling axe.[2] There were other implements

1 The Rise of British West Africa - Chapter XXIX

2 Miscellaneous Returns 1826-38 Page 75. Despatches to Secretary of State 1828-29 - 1st April, 1829

accessible to the Liberated Africans who were settled in the villages, for among the stores issued to Mr. John Doherty, Manager of Hastings in the 1830's were the following implements: hoes, pickaxes, shovels, felling axes, sledge hammers, Mason's axes, Mason's chissils, crowbars, whip saws, cross-cut saws, bill hooks, measuring chains, fore planes, joint planes, jack planes, hand saws, tenant saws, philister planes, bead plane, rabbit plane, augur planes, files and hammers.[1] Most probably these other tools could be purchased by Liberated Africans who were mainly carpenters, sawyers, shinglemakers, and Masons.

It was reckoned that £1:9:10¼ was spent on the supplies given to each located Liberated African. This is, however, a mere estimate, for the prices of articles varied at times. For example a Camp Kettle and an iron pot cost between six and ten shillings for both, and there were times when the stock of supplies demanded that five and not four adults should share the one Camp Kettle and Iron Pot. There were other times when supplies were more than adequate; then each adult would be given two instead of one tin plate. The amount therefore spent on each located Liberated African in furnishing him with clothing, house-hold utensils and agricultural implements was about £1: 11: 0d.

1 Liberated African Department - Letter Book - Hastings Returns 30-4-31

Until 1st January 1827, when Major General Sir Neil Campbell discontinued the supply of rations to Liberated Africans, settled Recaptives were given free provisions for the first six months of their arrival in the Colony of Sierra Leone. Each adult was supplied with a quart of rice, half a gile of salt per day, "Together with such proportion of beef as was then designed necessary for them."[1] Children were entitled to three quarters of the adult allowance. It is interesting to note that the amount of meat that was to be supplied to the Liberated Africans was vaguely stated. However, from the list of supplies that was given to Liberated Africans temporarily located by the Ordinance Department, it is stated that each Liberated African was supplied with ¼ pound of beef per day in addition to his rice, palm oil, and salt quotas. The Liberated Africans employed on the Ordinance works might have been granted the one quarter pound meat as a compensation for their labour. Those Liberated Africans located in the villages, even though they were supplied with some meat yet they did not receive as much as one quarter pound per head per day. Point of fact we are told that the supply of meat to Liberated Africans in the villages was discontinued after 31st December, 1825.[2] For the feed of a

1 17-2-1826 T.Cole to Major J.Rowan and Wellington Letter Book

2 22-3-26; 17-2-26 Letter Book

people whose daily food value should not exceed three pence, meat was a luxury. In the early 1820's, the price of cattle was fairly high; then a pound of meat was bought for five pence or six pence; for in a letter addressed to Joseph Reffell, the Chief Superintendent of Captured Negroes, the Managers of the villages of Regent, Bathurst, Gloucester, Leopold, and Charlotte asked that permission be granted to the villagers to raise the price of meat from five pence to six pence as was the price in Freetown.[1] There was a little slide down in the price of meat in the 1830's; then meat was sold at four pence a pound and a bullock's head cost 2s.2d.[2] Thus even when meat was at its lowest price the Liberated African with an allowance of three pence per day could not buy it, and be left with money to purchase his rice or foofoo.

With the discontinuance of the supply of rations to the Liberated Africans in January 1827, started a new system of granting them money allowances. Governor Neil Campbell's argument for this change was that the former practice of granting the Liberated Africans rations was open to abuse by the managers who were not only tempted to defraud the Recaptives of their rations, but also waisted much valuable time in superintending the distribution of the rations and in preparing the necessary store accounts, a process that was also time

1 Regent 18th August,1820 to Joseph Reffell/Letter Book

2 23-4-30 T. Cole to D. Coker Letter Book

waisting. Under Sir Neil Campbell's new system each male adult was entitled to a daily allowance of three pence for the first six months, each adult female was entitled to the same amount of allowance but just for three months. The reason here being that since there were more men in each of the settlements, the women would normally have picked up husbands in three months time, after which Government would no longer be responsible for their maintenance. A special arrangement was made for the support of the children. By this arrangement, adult Liberated Africans were to take care of the children until they were 15 years old. After fifteen the youths were treated as grownups and were formally located.

The founding of a new village was an occasion of hard work. The new villagers, under the direction of a Government Superintendent, had to clear a path from Freetown to the place of settlement. This often entailed cutting through thick jungle and carving paths through steep rocky hills. When the road is made the site for the settlement could then be cleared and it was only after that, that the building of huts started. When once a village had been established, the work of new settlers who subsequently join the village is lightened. All that future newly arrived Liberated Africans have to do is to get going at their huts. But even here it takes some time before the huts are built. Thus it was always the case that

the New Villagers were lodged for a time by their Countrymen who had already been settled in the village.[1] But for the communial nature of the African, it is doubtful how the newly settled Recaptives would have thrived on the three pence daily allowance during the first six months of his arrival. It is a well known fact that crops can only be raised once a year on inland farms in Tropical areas. If a batch of Liberated Africans was unfortunate to be located at a time when it was late in the season for sowing crops then those Liberated Africans would be a year without a farm of their own and, consequently, would have to live mainly on the charity of their neighbours. Moreover, even when the Liberated Africans arrived in good time to take advantage of the sowing season they would hardly have money with which to purchase seeds. So even here the Liberated African had to rely on charity.

The method of locating Liberated Africans in the Villages changed repeatedly from time to time. The manner of location was left entirely with the discretion of the Governor and each new Governor nearly always introduced an innovation in the former method of location.

One of the terms of reference of the Commission of 1826 was to report on the facilities which the then locations of Liberated Africans afforded for the cultivation of articles

1 The Rise of British West Africa Page 352; Seven Years in Sierra Leone Page 161.

having an exchangable value outside Sierra Leone.[1] From this and other terms of reference it was clear that not all was well with the system of location of Liberated Africans. In a despatch from Earl Bathurst to Sir Neil Campbell dated 11th July, 1826, Earl Bathurst, quoting the 1825 Commission, observed that

> "with a few exceptions, no grants of land or even regular locations, have been made to the Captured Negroes; and some instances of land being resumed, after it was cultivated, have raised a very great distrust in their mind as to their having any security for undisturbed property in their lots."

The immediate result of such a policy of land tenure was to develop in the Liberated Africans an unwillingness to embark on either large scale cultivation or the cultivation of slow yielding crops. Thus the Liberated African was bound to remain a peasant farmer who cultivated nothing but provisions or articles of immediate growth, and just enough of such crops that he needed for his own use. Earl Bathurst suggested that the Liberated Africans should be granted regular allotments to encourage the cultivation of slow bearing, but valuable crops like coffee, as well as to induce the Liberated Africans

1 18th January 1826 R. W. Hay to Commissioners of Enquiry for Sierra Leone S. O. S. Despatches

to put up permanent dwellings, "in place of their present wretched huts."[1] It is very likely that it was this suggestion of Earl Bathurst that Sir Neil Campbell carried out in so extreme a manner as to warrant strong criticism from Colonel Denham who wrote R. W. Hay saying:

> "The system of the grant of land to the Liberated Africans has been in my opinion almost too general, during the administration of Sir Neil Campbell, who at first wished even children to have lots of land marked out for their use, but this determination he was induced to alter, and adults alone were given grants..."[2]

Even before 1828, influential citizens of Freetown like Mr. Stephen Gabbidon, a prosperous merchant who had in his employ many Liberated Africans, had advised the Secretary of State that grants of land should be given to the industrious elements of the Liberated Africans as a form of reward for their exertions. Unfortunately these suggestions of men who were living on the spot, and who were quite unaffected whether grants of land were given or not to the Liberated Africans, were not considered, because it was feared by the British Government that the Liberated African could easily desert the land: "the natural indolent and capricious habits of the African and his fondness for the bush have hither-to rendered it inexpedient to make over to him land in perpetuity, which he might possibly neglect or even desert."[3]

1 11-7-26 S. O. S. Despatches

2 14-5-28 Governor's Despatch

3 12-12-27 R. W. Hay to Lieutenant Colonel Denham

In these circumstances the terms under which Liberated Africans held land were left entirely with the Governors to decide. "I should be glad, however, to hear from you on this subject," that is, the expediency of putting land in the hands of the Liberated Africans, "and to learn what are the terms upon which the Captured African is at present put in possession of the ground which he tills."[1] Thus even the Secretary of State did not know the system of land tenure of the Liberated Africans. So while the Governors before Sir Neil Campbell had been thight-fisted in granting land to Liberated Africans, Neil Campbell was rather too liberal in distributing land to the Recaptives.

Colonel Denham who did much for the Liberated Africans was of the opinion that the inhabitants of every village should have town and country lots granted to them. Besides these any extra grant of land to Liberated Africans was to come as a reward "for industrious habits." Consequently Denham advocated that on the arrival of Liberated Africans, they should only be given small lots for settlement; and after three years, if they proved to be industrious, they were to be given grants of country lots for farming. Accordingly, Denham proposed a new scale for the grant of land. A bachelor was to receive three acres of country lot, a married man four acres and half an acre

1 12-12-27 R. W. Hay to Denham

for every child above two years. These grants were to be made "to such inhabitants as have already built descent habitations in their town lots where they also reside.." Of such people who were in possession of descent houses, those who were communicants of the C.M.S. were to be given priority in possessing country lots.[1] The Church was thus influencing Government policy.

During Governor Rocketts time in 1829 Liberated Africans were located on the sides of the roads in the villages. Each man received a chain and a half of land in front of the road and about seven chains in the rear. Later on a new system was introduced by which all the newly arrived Liberated Africans would combine to assist each other in building their houses and laying their fields. This new system was most likely adopted to quicken the process of building their huts and of farming, so that the Liberated African could as soon as possible be able to support himself for the Government allowance had been reduced from three to two pence a head per day.[2] Again in 1836 we learn that each Liberated African when located in the Villages received one square chain of land to build his hut,

> "No matter whether his lot is on rock, there he is to live, and to raise produce to support himself the best way he can, and were it not for the kind feeling towards each other, many would perish from want."

1 14-5-28 Denham to Hay

2 30-6-29 Ricketts to Sir G. Murray

Moreover, "no regard has generally be had to the nature of the soil or situation, where villages have been formed, the most barren and inconvenient seem to have been selected."[1] Lord Glenelg then observed that in a settlement like Sierra Leone which did not possess enough capital to render any great subdivision of labour practicable, the general way of maintaining a livelihood was to provide each family with enough fertile land for cultivation.

As the Liberated Africans were not taught any method of agriculture the method of farming practised by them in their settlements was what they had learnt in their respective countries before they had been sold into slavery. This was a very primitive system of farming and is a system,even today commonly practised by many African tribes. Governor Ricketts in a letter to Sir G. Murray says that when a Liberated African is located in a village "He is first instructed in the method of building his house and afterwards in preparing and cultivating the ground."[2] This should not be taken literally. What Ricketts meant was that the Liberated Africans were guided by the manager or superintendent of the village in building their houses and in cultivating their farms. Mr Ricketts could hardly have meant to say that the Liberated African was taught how to build his hut or how to sow his seeds. These basic

1 1-12-36 Glenelg to Governor Campbell

2 30-6-29

skills had already been learnt by the Liberated African even before he came to Sierra Leone.

The system of agriculture pursued by the Recaptives was, as has already been said, typically African. When the area for the farm had been selected, a clearing is made. This involves the cutting of all trees and shrubs, which, otherwise cannot be easily burnt. The trees and shrubs are now left to dry up. When it is certain that even the largest felled tree in the farming area is quite dry, fire is set to the pile of dried trees and brackens. This process is called burning the farm. If a farming area is well burnt, there will be very little left of stumps of trees, after the fire is out. But this perfection is not always achieved. The unfortunate farmer who does not succeed in burning his farm well is put to the extra task of removing all large stumps that had remained unburnt from the farming area. Between the time of the burning of the farm and sowing time is a period of a few days. Normally the farm is burnt with the anticipation of the commencement of the rainy season in about a fortnight's time. If the farmer is planting Cassada, now called Cassava, his labours end for the meantime with sowing time. But if he is sowing rice then he has to keep on tending care to his crops until harvest time, because at every stage of its development, the rice shoot is open to injury from birds, thorny weeds, and bush rats. Birds delight in feeding on the young shoots as well as on the ears of rice before it is ripe. Thorns have to be weeded out from the farm to ensure a full havest. The fear of

rats devouring the young shoots is always in the mind of the farmer. The Western Area, especially in the vicinity of York, was notorious for having mountain rats which destroyed the villager's rice farms, to the extent that the villagers were obliged to go considerable distances along the York-Kent Road in search of a good farming area.[1]

This was the system of cultivation practised by the Liberated Africans. It was a system that needed plenty of spare ground for alternative farming areas. For each farming area is only used once to produce rice during a period of five years. To pin down the Liberated African to use just one Country lot for farming was almost the same as prohibiting him from farming after the first year. Colonel Denham acknowledged the plain fact that the method of farming adopted by the Liberated African required the use of alternative fields; but Denham was a little wrong in limiting the number of such alternative fields to two or three.[2] To enable him to farm in his tribal African method, the Liberated African needed about five alternative farming areas. Moreover, "The greater portion of the land of the Colony will not after the first year's use yield a satisfactory crop, and in the wet season is quickly covered with grass and weeds, which require constant labour to keep them down, the Liberated African will therefore not cultivate the same spot the ensuring year."[3] Thus even the

1 12-8-29 D. A. Coker to Ricketts

2 14-5-28 Governor's Despatches to S.O.S.

3 30-6-29 Ricketts to Sir G. Murray

nature of the soil would not permit the use of one field over again for agriculture without having recourse to applying some system of manuring to the land. In a despatch to Earl Bathurst, Sir Neil Campbell commented thus on the method of farming of the Liberated Africans:

> "They have followed their former habits, universal in Africa, burning down at first the large timber with which all the peninsula was covered, and after the soil was partially exhausted by cultivation for two seasons at most, they passed to another spot, following the same process, without any order or any enclosures, occasionally cultivating the parts cleared upon their first arrival, if not occupied by another."[1]

In spite of these odds the Liberated Africans took to farming. Regent's Town, although situated in a valley, surrounded by lofty hills, contained about twelve acres of cultivated land, growing Cocoas, Cassadas, Plantains, Bananas, and Coffee, in 1817, just seven years after its foundation.[2] Kissy, the granary of the Colony, was reported as having cultivated fields on all its sides in 1820;

> " The whole of the country round Kissy is in a state of very good cultivation, there are in every direction extensive fields of rice, in a very forward state. The Cassada and Groundnut fields also promise an abundant harvest. More rice will be raised this year in the Parish of St. Patrick than was ever raised before in the Colony."[2]

1 22-4-27 Governor's Despatch
2 Proceedings of the C.M.S. 1820-21

The Sierra Leone Royal Gazette in paying tribute to the industry of the Liberated Africans wrote, among other things:

> "The superiority of the Mountain Roads, the cleanliness and respectable appearance of the villages, the immense forests cleared away, and the soil covered with the various productions of the climate, fully attest the unremitting industry of these interesting people."[1]

During the Christmas Quarter of the same period, 3,067 bushels of cassada were sold to Government, at a total value of £134: 3s. 7½d. by the farmers of Charlotte alone. In 1824, Kissy Village sold upwards to £800 worth of surplus agricultural produce to Government; Wellington sold £514. 16s. 0½d; Charlotte sold £627. 11s. 0d. worth of surplus produce, and Regent with no Superintendent for the past two years was able to sell £341. 3s. 0d. worth of surplus agricultural produce.[2] All these testify that the Liberated Africans, on the whole did not neglect the soil.

But the Liberated African's progress in agricultural was bound to be a limited one. In 1829 Governor Ricketts declared to Sir G. Murray that "The Liberated Africans who have been any length of time in the Colony have all evinced a desire to engage in agricultural pursuits and would I am certain extend it considerably beyond its present scale were they satisfied that their industry would be rewarded, but while they labour under this idea that they can only receive merchandise in payment for exportable produce, I fear that little more than raising provisions will be attended to."[3]

1. Quoted in C.M.S. Proceedings of 1822-23
2 C.M.S. Proceeding 1825-26
3 30-6-29 Governor's Despatches

Speaking about the industry of the people located in the Villages Mr. F. Campbell declared: "I am certain that exportable produce would be cultivated to a much greater extent than it is at present if the merchants of the Colony would give them the smallest encouragement," for prices were paid in merchandize which the agriculturalists did not like.[1] Even in the 1840's, merchants of the Colony were still cheating Liberated Africans of the full value of their exportable produce, for we learn that Liberated African produce such as ginger, arrow root, pepper and groundnuts were purchased by merchants for goods only, and not for money, and that even the selection of the goods was the prerogative of the merchant.[2] There was therefore little reward behind the Liberated African's show of industry in agriculture. Mr. Davey, Superintendent of the Mountain District in 1824 reported that the villagers of Leopold could not find a market for more than one-fourth of their produce, even though this produce was mainly of local unexportable, food stuff.[3] Thus the Liberated African was at a double disadvantage in obtaining returns from agricultural pursuits. If he grew exportable crops he ran the risk of not obtaining adequate rewards from the local merchants who paid for agricultural produce in kind.

1 Liberated African Returns Dec. 1831 Governor's Despatches 8-3-32

2 13-3-45 R.G.Butts, Final Report on the prospects of Immegration in the West Indies

3 C. M. S. Proceedings 1824-25

On the other hand if he had a surplus of unexportable food stuff, like cassada, or rice then he had to compete for a market, in the Colony, with other farmers who also had surplus yields of the same crops. The only natural way out of such a dilemma was not to grow an excess of unexportable food stuff, and not to undertake the cultivation of any exportable crop. This was the line of action that was forced on the Liberated African.

From the agricultural returns of the different Liberated African Villages in the period 1827 to 1838 which will be found in the Appendix, there was a gradual sliding down of the avereage number of acres of land in cultivation starting from December 1832. In the same year, 1832, F. Campbell in a letter to Governor A. Findlay wrote: " The Liberated Africans in general are making rapid progress in their agricultural and commercial pursuits and I have no hesitation in stating that the greater part of the retail trade of the Colony, will in the course of a few years be in their hands,"[1]

The Liberated African was certain that he could not thrive on agriculture alone, he therefore hoarded up the few pennies that he collected from agriculture to raise up a capital for petty trading, either as a hawker or as an owner of a petty stall in Freetown or in his own village. By the early 1830's

1 5-8-32 Letter Book

there were about 300 Recaptive hawkers in the streets of Freetown.[1] These Recaptive hawkers were fortunate to have no big European retail firms to compete with in the 1830's, for the reduction of British expenditure on West Africa which had started in 1827, resulted in the ruin and folding up of many European firms. Moreover with the signing of the Equipment Treaties in the Mid-1830's, which gave the Mixed Commissions Court the power of condemning all slavers which carried slaving equipment, the British Naval Squadrons started bringing into Freetown harbour, slavers filled with valuable trade goods that had veen shipped from the West Indies for barter in West Africa. These confiscated goods were sold at public auctions in Freetown where the Recaptives clubbed together and outbid their rivals, both Europeans and Settlers. Because of their frugal life and less family committments as compared with the Settlers, the Recaptives further discouraged their trade rivals, by undercutting them. The Recaptive trader was even strengthened in his business when in the 1840's he was introduced by the Wesleyan Missionaries to wholesale firms in England where he could now order out good on credit on the same basis as the European trader. Lieutenant Forbes, R.N., in his "The African Blockade," in which, inter alia, life in Freetown in the mid 1840's is described, makes the following remarks about the business

1 Four Sierra Leone Recaptives-Journal of African History, 11, 1961

acumen of the Recaptives: "The Liberated African rises into a man of property and £8,000 or £10,000 is by no means an uncommon sum for them to possess."[1] Trade therefore was a stepping stone to a higher standard of living for the Liberated Africans.

At any rate not all the Liberated Africans could possibly have entered trade. Many enlisted their services as sawyers, carpenters, shipwrights and mainly as labourers in the timber factories that studded the creeks in the neighbourhood of the Colony. In the Sierra Leone or Rokell River alone there were not less than 12 timber factories by the 1850's.[2] Here in the timber factories the most labourious work that had to be done was what was termed Hauling, that is, dragging the timber from the spot where it was cut down to the creek upon which it was to be floated to the factory or shipping place. The hauling distance varied from five to seven miles. In this kind of work the Liberated Africans competed with labourers from the Timmanee and Sherbro tribes as well as from the Kroos. In 1840 the Liberated Africans petitioned the British Government to remove all aliens, - Kroomen, Madingoes, Sherbros, and Timmanees - from the Colony on the pretext that those aliens were depriving them of a prosperous trade through competition. Fortunately, however, this petition of the

1 The African Blockade, Chapter 11

2 Report on the Sierra Leone Factories. A. Pike.
S. O. S. Despatches 11-9-55

Liberated Africans was not granted, although Governor R. Doherty appeared to have been infavour of it. According to Governor Doherty the physical ability of the Timmanees or Sherbros was "Not greater than that of the Liberated people;" and for Doherty the physical ability of the Kroos did not exceed that of the Sherbros or Timmanees: and because Liberated African labour was readily accessible in all parts of the Colony, there was therefore no need for having recourse to the use of alien labour. It is hard to support Governor Doherty in this stand point. Moreover, it must be remembered that the Kroos, in particular, had by 1840, established a reputation for endurance of toil to the extent that they had earned the name of "Asses" in Sierra Leone.[1]

Liberated African Apprentices who worked in the timber factories along the Rokell and adjacent rivers were very efficient in rafting and butting the timber logs, and in sawing boards and scantling. For such services rendered, Liberated African apprentices received between 4 and 5 dollars per month, together with food and clothing. Normally, Liberated African Apprentices served three years in the Timber factories. At the end of the three year period, the apprentices would be handed over to the Liberated African Department for location

1 7-10-40 R. Doherty to Lord John Russell; Robert Guppy's Report on Emigration from Sierra Leone. 18-10-44 S. O. S. Despatches.

in the villages. However, many Liberated Africans, after serving their apprenticeship period, still preferred to remain in the timber factories to work for wages.[1]

In 1844, labourers wages in the Colony was 4 pence a day; 5 pence a day was considered exorbitant wages.[2] In 1845 Mr. R. G. Butts in his report on emigration said that the rate of hire for labourers varied from 2 to 4 pence in the villages, and from 6 to 9 pence in the towns a day.[3] From Robert Guppy's Report on emigration from Sierra Leone we learn that Creol Labourers received 4 pence while Kroo men received 18 pence per day. It is probable that in this category of Creol Labourers was included the Liberated African also. If this is so then Kroo Labour was highly in demand.[4]

Many Settled Liberated Africans also found employment in the timber factories. The young men of Campbell Town, near Waterloo, were employed by Mr. Allen in his timber factory.[5] By 1830 five timber factories had been established in the Mellicourie, thirty miles north of the Colony, by Sierra Leone Colonists; and Liberated Africans were working there.[6]

1 30-6-29. Ricketts to Sir G. Murray
2 7-5-44 S. O. S. Despatch
3 13-3-45 S. O. S. Despatch
4 18-10-44 S. O. S. Despatch
5 29-9-46 Letter Book, 2nd Eastern District
6 7-10-30 Letter Book

In 1838 Mr. Stephen Gabbidon, a merchant of the Colony, offered the Island of Metecong, about 50 miles north of Sierra Leone to the Government for £2,000. Mr. Gabbidon had taken possession of the Island of Metecong since 1825, and had since that time been offering employment to Liberated Africans there.[1] The field of operation of the Liberated Africans in timber work and trade was very wide and in many instances it extended far beyond the areas of their respective settlements.

1 2-3-38 Gabbidon to Glenelg S. O. S. Despatch

CHAPTER V

LIFE IN THE LIBERATED AFRICAN VILLAGES.

That the Liberated Africans could have become a useful, industrious and orderly community in less than half a century is one of the enigmas in the history of the Colony of Sierra Leone. Indeed, the Settler Groups - Nova Scotians and Maroons were so baffled by the speedy advancement of the Liberated Africans, whom they had thought would remain forever their servants, but who were now surpassing them in wealth, that they grew jealous and envious of the Liberated Africans, to the extent of ascribing the cause of their decline partly to the "thievish propensities" of the Recaptives.[1] The transformation of these "discordant elements of many savage tribes" into a civilized and orderly community of self-supporting people was the result of the joint cooperation of the British Government and the Officers of the Church Missionary Society. The British Government supplied the finance and the directives while the bulk of the personnel was provided by the C. M. S.

As if by design, the failure of the C. M. Society's efforts among the Sussos almost coincided, in time, with the opening of a new field of work in the Colony of Sierra Leone when Recaptives started to be settled in the Villages.

1 F. H. Rankin V.1 Page 93 ff; Four Sierra Leone Recaptives - C. Fyfe.

The Liberated African Village Communities, therefore became a useful substitute for the abandoned Susso Mission. And because of the divers collection of tribes that was represented in each Liberated African Village, the C. M. S. were surer to succeed in their evangelization of West Africa if they could turn the Liberated Africans into good Christians than toiling fruitlessly among just one tribe; for in the long run the Liberated African converts could be used as emissaries to their different countries. Thus by working among the Liberated Africans in the Colony of Sierra Leone, the C. M. S. were aiming at killing many birds with a single stone. The C. M. Society's foremost objective was to make good Christians of the Recaptives, and to this end all other aims were secondary.

The situation in the Colony in the early 19th century was such that directed that the C. M. S. should work mainly among the Recaptives. To the majority of the Nova Scotians and the Maroons, Christianity was almost an accepted religion. They had their own Churches and Ministers in Freetown even before the arrival of the C. M. Society's clergymen. The only evangelical work that was done by the C. M. S. among the Settlers was in the ranks of some Maroon families. But this was rather trifling in scope and cannot at all stand comparison with the grand labour among Recaptives. The

possibility of opening a field of missionary work from among the native population of the Colony was remote at this time. The only choice that was left for the C. M. S. was to work among the Recaptives.

It was during Charles MacCarthy's administration that the agreement between the C. M. S. and the British Government for joint work among the Liberated Africans was signed. As early as 1816, the C. M. S. had undertaken the responsibility of supporting some 200 children of the Captured Negroes who were maintained in the Christian Institution at Leicester Mountain.[1] On the 17th January 1818 Earl Bathurst, in a letter to Charles MacCarthy, gave information about an agreement by which the C. M. S. were to defray the salaries of all the school masters in the Colony of Sierra Leone and to rejuvenate the education of the Country. This was to cost the C. M. S. something between £1,500 and £1,600 annually, exclusive of a yearly expenditure of £1,000 for the maintenance of 200 children. In return for the C.M.S. concession, Government -

> "Will assign to seven clergymen who are to be placed as rectors over the country parishes the same stipend which is at present paid to the several superintendents."[2]

In addition, government was also to be responsible for the salary of the Chaplain of the Colony; Government was to provide

1 Sierra Leone Gazette, 6th January 1816; 1-11-1816 S. O. S. Despatch

2 17-1-1818 Bathurst to MacCarthy

a house for lodging and a portion of land for glebe to each clergyman; and it was also hoped that Government would grant retiring pensions to these clergymen.[1]

The main purpose, from the C.M.S. stand point, of this agreement was to obtain government support for religious education in the Liberated African Villages, according to the rites of the C. M. S. creed, and to entrench secular education in their hands as well. The C. M. S. were therefore playing their cards very well. All aspects of the education of the Liberated Africans were thus to be entrusted in their care. But this apparent zeal of the C.M.S. to be responsible for education among the Recaptives was motivated by fear. By 1818 the Peninsula of Sierra Leone had been divided into eight parishes, one in Freetown and seven in the villages around Freetown. Over the seven country parishes were placed seven superintendents of different religious denominations. It was therefore feared, by the C.M.S. that when clergymen would later on be placed over these Parishes, great inconveniences might arise "from many of the people having imbibed predilictions against the Church" - the C.M.S. It was therefore to safeguard against such future difficulties that the C.M.S. showed much eagerness in taking over the education

1 Minutes of Sierra Leone 1818 - S.O.S. Despatches

and the management of the Recaptives.

In 1824, the C.M.S. overwhelmed with the burden of executing both clerical and secular duties at a time when the recruitment of missionaries into Sierra Leone was a problem in itself, entered into a new agreement with the British Government. By this agreement the C.M.S. handed over some of its administrative duties in the Liberated African Settlements. The C.M.S. agreed to provide a clergyman for each parish and to be responsible for providing and paying lay superintendents of the Villages. The Liberated African Department was to take over control of Village Schools, to pay teachers and to provide buildings for schools, churches and personages.[1]

This new agreement contrasted very sharply with the previous one. While in 1818 the C. M. S. had with eagerness taken over a good deal of administrative responsibility for the Liberated African Villages, now in 1824 it was prepared to hand over all of its former administrative work that was purely secular. The key to this change of policy of the C.M.S lay in the fact that the Superintendents in the villages were so beset with the execution of secular duties appertaining to their managerial posts that they were left with little time for the performance of, what they regarded as their much more important clerical duties. The Rev. W.A.B.Johnson in a letter

1 Church Missionary Record 1830

dated 18th July 1816 wrote: "I wish my time was not taken up so much with stores and cultivation." Moreover, it was hoped that by relieving missionaries of secular administration, recruitment of C.M.S. workers into Sierra Leone would become easier.[1]

These new arrangements with the C.M.S. however, came to an end when Governor Sir Neil Campbell took over the administration of the Colony. But before we examine the changes introduced by Neil Campbell, it might be well for us to sportlight some of the activities of the C.M.S. Superintendents among their villagers.

One of the villages in which the C.M.S. achieved outstanding successwms at Regent under the superintendence of the Rev. W.A.B.Johnson. From Johnson's letters written from Hogbrook, the original name of Regent, we learn that Johnson's day started at about 5 O'clock in the morning when he would have family prayers from 5 to 6 a.m. at his residence. If the day were a Sunday, then the family prayers would also be attended by the villagers. Morning prayers which took the form of singing hymns and reading from the Gospel followed family prayers. Between 9 and10 O'clock there was a general Sunday Service for the whole village congregation. After the ten O'clock service there would be instruction for the children. In the Afternoon at 3 there would be Divine Service again.

1 C. Fyfe Page 154

After this service Johnson would pay visits to the neighbouring villages of Regent to preach the word of God to the villagers who were outside the control of the Liberated African Department. In this extra-pastoral work, Johnson and the other C.M.S. Missionaries relied on the services of literate Recaptives like William Tamba, William Davies, and David Noah and others to interpret the word of God to the Natives. Thus the Recaptives were a valuable auxiliary to the propagation of the Christian Faith among the Natives of Sierra Leone.[1] Moreover, as the Missionaries insisted on oral testimony of personal experience as the outward manifestation of conversion, many Recaptives soon learnt to speak the English Language. Church congregations were also divided into classes under Liberated African Class leaders. Thus the C.M.S. were gradually training Recaptives for leadership and to shoulder responsibility. Sunday ended at Regent Town under Rev. Johnson with a final service at 7 p.m.

On week days, in addition to his pastorial work Rev. W.A.B. Johnson had to supervise the school of the village which in 1816, July consisted of 8 classes. In the evening at 6 O'clock two classes were held for the adults. The female class was supervised by Mrs. Johnson while Mr. Johnson took the male class. Owing to an inadequacy of teachers, the monitorial system was used in Johnson's classes.[2]

1 C.M.S. Proceedings 1818-1819

2 C.M.S. Proceedings 1817-1818

In addition to his supervision of the school, Johnson, like all the other Superintendents had also to see to the welfare of the Villagers. He had to issue them ration, to supervise, the cultivation of their farms, the building of their huts, and their general orderliness in the village. As magistrate, he had to listen to cases of various sorts and to dispense justice. Now and again he would receive orders from the Chief Superintendent of Captured Negroes summoning him to Freetown to collect a newly landed cargo for Recaptives who were to be settled at Regent.[1] Such newly arrived Liberated Africans were located in the homes of their countrymen who had already been previously settled. Mr. Rankin in his book "The Whiteman's Grave," objects to the billeting of Newly Arrived Liberated Africans upon communities that had started to be civilized on the ground that such billeting retarded the progress of civilization. Mr. Rankin assumes that by associating with the Newly arrived Liberated Africans whose practices were primitive, the old established Liberated Africans were inclined to revert to barbarous customs and practices which they had forgotten. This view can hardly hold ground for there is no proof given by Rankin to show that the Liberated Africans were prone to relapse to babarity as a result of association with their newly arrived Countrymen. On the other hand Mr. Rankin is sadly silent about the

1 Seven Years in Sierra Leone Chapter 7, Page 159

civilizing and educative influence which the newly arrived Liberated Africans imbibed from their already established country folks. How invaluable would William Tamba or David Noah or William Davies have been if they were to play hosts to a number of newly landed Recaptives!

Once a week all Superintendents had to go for fresh supplies of rations from the Liberated African Department in Freetown. It was really hard work to be a village Superintendent like W.A.B.Johnson. "Glory be to the Lord... who has given me plenty of work and health and strength to do it," exclaimed Johnson.[1]

By 1818 the Liberated Africans at Regent under Rev. W.A.B. Johnson seemed to have attained a high degree of moral and intellectual development. At the end of the meeting of the Missionary Association held on 7th December to mark the first anniversary of that Association, some Liberated Africans delivered cogent and touching addresses to their comrades, urging them to support the cause of the Association as it was a means of enlightenment to their less favoured brethren. One of the Recaptives declared:

> "I thank God for what he has done for me. When I was sold, at first I cried much, and thought they would eat me; but I knew not that Jesus Christ had put me in the good way, as He says,'I shall lead them by a way that they know not, and by paths which they have not known'...When I first came, I knew nothing, and laughted at prayer;..we do not see God;

1 Letter from Regent 18-7-1816

> but we see the Sun and Moon, the trees and all the other things. Did ever any person see a mountain or a stone make these things? - then we know tat God made them...We are strangers in the world and should trust in the Lord, and be easy with little, that we may spare some for send Missionaries to our Country people."[1]

It did not take the C. M. S. long to teach Charity to the Recaptives, for being Africans, the Recaptives were benevolently inclined by custom. What, however, the C.M.S. were at pains to get across to the Liberated Africans was the notion of extending Charity even to one's enemies.[2] When it was suggested to form a Missionary Association at Kent, an out-spoken Liberated African declared that as his Country people had sold him for a slave, he had no wish to do them any good as they had caused him so much injury.

In 1827, on the 1st of January, Governor Neil Campbell who was determined to effect economy in all aspects of the administration of the Colony of Sierra Leone, put new orders into operation concerning the management of the Liberated Africans. The villages were divided into three Districts; Eastern or River District included Kissy and all the villages in between as far as Waterloo; Mountain or Central District embraced all the mountain settlements including Wilberforce and Murray Town; and Western or Sea District consisted of all the villages lying on the west coast from Aberdeen to Kent.

1 C. M. S. Proceedings 1818-1819
2 C. M. S. Proceedings 1820-1821

The C. M. S. clergy who had acted as village Superintendents were replaced by lay officials who were now given a new title - Managers. Sub-Managers were stationed in smaller villages. In the field of education also the C. M. S. were supplanted by lay teachers, mainly persons of Colour. The period of schooling was reduced. Boys in schools were not to be retained beyond the age of 10 or 12, but should be distributed to adult Liberated Africans to be employed. Children who were thus placed in charge of older settlers were to continue receiving their food and clothing allowances, weekly, until they were 15 years old. After 15 years of age the youths were released from the care of their guardians, granted lots for their subsistence and thus formally located as if grown up. Children placed under guardians were to render 2 days weekly work for the manager, and 4 days for their guardians. But all this work was to be performed after school hours, which were from 9 to 12 Noon, and from 1 to 3 in the afternoon on week days. Children above 15 years were given instruction from 11 to 12 Noon, and from 1 to 3 p.m. on week days.

This system of locating school going children was open to abuse for guardians who were eager to obtain the utmost service from their wards did not want the children to go to school. "We cannot feed and clothe them if they are to go to

school: we want them to work for us, "was the general feeling of the guardians.[1] Neil Campbell was sacrificing education to economy. In 1827 Colonel D. Denham reported to R.W. Hay that demoralization had taken place among the younger Liberated Africans of both sexes as a result of the closing of the schools and the distribution of children among the villagers, that the elder school girls, instead of being married and settled in the villages, had left their adopted parents because of ill-treatment or neglect and were living in a state of prostitution in Freetown.[2] Moreover, Sir Neil Campbell's new arrangements were not altogether free from fraud. In 1842, a complaint was brought against Mr. Palmer, Assistant Manager of New Tombo for giving out food stuff instead of cash to the Newly Arrived Liberated Africans. According to Government instructions, Liberated Africans, while building their houses and clearing areas for farms, were to be given 1½ pennies per day per head. Mr. Palmer excused himself by saying that when the New People were given their monies for food, they tended to wonder about and thus waisted much time in searching for food. This excuse of Mr. Palmer, cannot however stand; for it was the Overseer's job to collect food stuff and to arrange for possible areas of purchase of food for the Liberated Africans.[3]

1 Church Missions in Sierra Leone - Page 274 ff

2 27-8-27 Letter Book

3 30-5-42 - G. Terry to Macdonald Letter Book

Although the C. M. S. were given inspectorial powers in the Liberated African Schools, yet it was soon evident that Neil Campbell's new educational system could not work well. On the 14th March 1827, scarcely three months since the new orders came into operation, the Governor issued instructions to the Managers of the villages to pay attention to the manner in which schools were kept with particular emphasis on adhering to the official hours of instruction. Moreover, half yearly inspections of schools were to be made for assessing the progress of individual children so that those who did not seem to be benefiting from instruction would be removed from school and indented to respectable inhabitants for farm work. While at school children were to receive an allowance of 2 pence per head per day and they could be put to work for the manager, at any time outside school hours.

In lieu of rations the Newly Arrived Liberated Africans, adults, were granted allowances of 3 pence a day per head: males for 6 months and females for three months. One of the reasons which prompted this innovation was the frequency with which Superintendents and Overseers defrauded Liberated Africans of their rations. But even when a money allowance was substituted the practice of defrauding Recaptives of their moneys did not end. The salary paid to managers and other officers was such that it did not place them above the temptation to cheat Liberated Africans.

The C. M. S. protested strongly to the Secretary of State about the evil effects of these new orders on the grounds that by allowing children to be lodged with adults, the discipline and instruction which they received at school would be neutralized. Government transferred the control of the schools and the civil superintendence of the villages from C.M.S. to the Managers and Sub-Managers. In 1850, however, inconformity with the British Government's desire to carry out retrenchment in the Liberated African Department, the Principal Secretary of State gave his consent to the transfer of the Schools at Charlotte, Gloucester, Wellington and Kent, together with the responsibility for the children therein, to the C.M.S. Government then promised to pay six pence per day for every child maintained by the C. M. S. in all these schools. Thus once more the Church-Government partnership was brought into operation in providing education for the Recaptives.[1]

The work of the C. M. S. Superintendents in the Liberated African Settlements was on the whole very successful when judged from the habits of industry and self-reliance they were able to instil into the Recaptives. Speaking about the industry of a farmer of Regent Mr. Johnson wrote:

1 C. S. L. B. No. 15. 22-2-1850

"He sold, last year, cassada £30, cocoa £19, Indian Corn £3 - total £52. He has more than this value now on the ground - some Indian Corn to sell, which is good for seed - and a great quantity of pine - apples, plantains, and bananas now growing; and clear ground for rice. Three years ago, he bought two goats, which have since produced fifteen. He is building a substantial house. All this is the fruit of his labour!"[1]

Under C. M. S. supervision Regent, Kissy, Waterloo, to name a few, formally nothing but tropical jungle, rose up to be flourishing Villages. Regent under Rev. W.A.B.Johnson and his successors attained such a height of development both economically as well as intellectually that it became the centre of Liberated African Culture. Indeed, Regent held such an exalted position among the Liberated African Settlements that it was made the cross-roads of all the principal villages. Even today each Liberated African Village in the Peninsula of Sierra Leone has a road not only perpetuating the name of Regent, but actually leading to Regent Town. Kissy's principal contribution was in its agricultural out-put. Under Rev. Nylender, Kissy Town, ranked second to Regent, and was the principal food producing area. Waterloo was not only an agricultural settlement but also a timber growing district which offered employment to crowds of Liberated African labourers and timber workers. Rightly could the C.M.S. have proclaimed that it was in their Liberated African Settlements

1 C. M. S. Proceedings 1822 - 23

that the richest enjoyment awaited their benefactors and subscribers. There they might contemplate with delight "The happy fruits of that system, the primary feature of which is Religious Instruction, and with proceeding from that instruction, the inculcation of moral and industrious habits."[1] Even after the withdrawal of the C. M. S. from supervision, the Eastern District was still providing employment for about 500 men in timber work.[2]

With the withdrawal of C. M. S. supervision, many of the Liberated African Villages started to deteriorate. This can be seen most vividly in the case of the Western District which, having been deserted by the C. M. S. in 1829 fell quickly into decay.[3] Regent Town which had flourished under W.A.B.Johnson, gradually declined after Johnson's death in 1823 and finally lost its leading position among the Liberated African Villages. Whereas there were some 2,000 inhabitants in Regent Town in 1823, two years after Johnson's death, in 1825 the population of Regent had shrunk to about 1,100.[4] With the decrease in numerical strength went also a corresponding decrease in productivity. While in 1821 the Benefit Society of Regent sold

1 C. M. S. Proceedings 1822-23
2 29-3-31 Letter Book
3 C. M. S. Record January 1830: C.M.S. Proceedings 1828-29
4 C. M. S. Proceedings 1823-24: 1825-26

4,050 bushels of cocoa and 9,721 bushels of cassada to Government - all surplus produce; in 1825 Regent could only afford to sell a surplus of 735 bushels of cocoa and 4,784 bushels of cassada - a considerable drop in productivity. In the same year 1825, Charlotte obtained £627: 11s. 0d. from the sale of surplus produce, as compared with Regent's sale of £341: 3s. 0d.[1] This decay of Regent was mainly due to the want of supervision; for since early 1823 Regent Town had, with little intermission, been deprived of a resident superintendent.

To the C. M. S. Superintendents tribal associations and practices of the Liberated Africans were diabolic habits and customs which must be stamped out, if the Liberated Africans were to be made good Christians. Tribal drummings and dancing were even discouraged by the C. M. S. Superintendents. All these, to the C. M. Society were relics of babarity and paganism, and a real manifestation of a lack of progress of the Liberated Africans. In 1855 Rev. C. T. Frey, who was in charge of the River District commenting on the progress of his district wrote: "Nightly dancings and drummings have almost disappeared." In the same vein, Rev. C.T. Ehemann who had charge of the Mountain and Sea Districts in 1855 declared:

> "The general conduct too, of these Mountaineers is very different from what it used to be ten or twelve years ago. There is no more that noisy, boisterous spirit among them which used to delight in drumming,dancing, gunfiring,....

1 C.M.S.Proceedings 1821-22: 1825-26

particularly at their Company meetings, and other exercises."[1]

Two years after the withdrawal of C. M. S. Supervision from the Liberated African Settlements, Mr. Garber who was manager of Waterloo presented the following unfavourable report about the progress of his people:

> "There is but little difference between them and the inhabitants of a Timmanee or Sherbro Village, except in clothing; for drumming and dancing with all the country-fashions, begin with the night, as in the Native Villages in the Country."[2]

What was more annoying to Mr. Gaber was that Government then allowed the Liberated Africans to sound their drums and dance. In that same year, the report from Gloucester was none the better: "The drums, the dance, and the gun were almost constantly to be heard" and these were taken as the sign of the relapse of the Recaptives into Heathenism.

This, however, was a wrong assessment by the C. M. S. of progress among the Liberated Africans. Drumming and dancing and the Company meetings were common features in the African background of the Recaptive. By discouraging the Liberated Africans from drumming and dancing and Company meetings, the C. M. S. were depriving the Recaptives not only of a valuable means of recreation, but were also putting an obstacle in the development of mutual relationship and cooperation among the

1 C.M.S. Proceedings 1855-56

2 C.M.S. Proceedings 1828-29

the Liberated Africans. Indeed the Company meetings of the Liberated Africans were the beginnings of a system of communial help to needy or distressed numbers, a system that was later on used by the C.M.S. itself under the name of Benefit Societies. The C.M.S. failed in their endeavour to stamp out drumming and dancing from the Liberated African Settlements; for these practices were almost inherent in the nature of the Recaptives.

As missionaries the C.M.S. Superintendent's main task was to evangelize the Recaptives and in this they were to a large extent successful. One of the longings of the Recaptives was a yearining to belong to a group or a society. Having been banished from home, and having lost all that they had formerly cherished, the Recaptives when landed in Sierra Leone were a forlon people, a people who would easily embrace any doctrine or creed or individual that offered solace to them, either mentally or physically. The C.M.S. Superintendents were favourably positioned to provide for the Recaptive's needs. As ministers of religion they brought spiritual comfort into the perturbed hearts of the Liberated Africans through the aid of the Gospel teaching; and as lay officers of the Liberated African Department they also ministered to the material needs of the Recaptives. They were the issuers of rations as well as the arbiters of justice to the Liberated Africans. Thus in the C.M.S. clergyman were blended all the attributes that the Liberated African held in esteem. Moreover, the Christian Gospel had a peculiar appeal to the Recaptives who having learnt

about the sufferings of Christ came to regard their own past sufferings as mere trifles. Many Liberated Africans, upon their accepting Christianity, regarded themselves as the chosen people who should spread the good tidings of the Christian Faith to their Countrymen. At Regent, a Liberated African convert declared:

"When I read the forty-fifth Chapter of Genesis, the latter part of the first verse- Joseph made himself known unto his brethren- When I read this word, I say in my heart, Oh that the Lord may enable me to go to my Country people, to carry the good tidings to them! " [1]

The Bible therefore and those who preached it were a source of inspiration and solace to the Recaptives.

On the whole, the C.M.S. suceeded in its dual responsibility to the Liberated Africans, for they not only superintended the villages but also won many converts to Christianity. Indeed under C.M.S. superintendence a large number of Recaptives accepted the Christian Faith, became ardent followers of Christ and some even became ministers and lay-preachers. Nevertheless, in the ranks of the supposed Christian Liberated Africans were a few back-sliders and half-hearted believers who continued to practise their "Country fashion" along side with their newly adopted faith.[2]

1 C.M.S. Proceedings 1820 -21

2 C.M.S. Proceedings

There were other Liberated Africans who remained non-believers of the Christian Faith. These non-believers, partly due to the discriminatory policy of the C.M.S.Superintendents towards them, and partly also because they desired to be free from Christian influence, founded separate townships in the neighbour-hood of the official settlements, and there remained under their own tribal leaders. Such was the case at Regent about the time of Rev. W.A.B.Johnson,and also for Kissy under Rev. Nylender. These townships often went by native names like, Funkia, Cabenda, Benguema and others.

There can hardly be a more apt description of the Liberated African communities in the Colony Villages during the first half of the 19th. century than Sir George Collier's comments:

> " I visited all the Black Towns and Villages, attended the public schools and other establishments, and I never withessed in any population more contentment and happiness." [1]

Truly the C.M.S. so succeeded in inculcating contentment in the Liberated Africans through the Gospel teachings that the Recaptives accepted whole-heartedly that one who professed to be a Christian should "be easy with little"- that is, to be content with little. [2] This watch-word of being easy with little was the key to the speedy rise of the Liberated Africans. By it the Liberated Africans turned out to be a thrifty class which did not only lay down aside a part of its earnings for missionary work, but also saved its pennies to raise up capital for trade.

1 C.M.S. Proceedings 1820-1821, 2 C.M.S.Proceedings 1818-19.

Moreover, with contentment well driven home into the heads of the Recaptives, their lives in the villages became a life of happiness even in the midst of poverty.

Thanks to the apprenticeship system, many well-to-do Recaptives used Liberated African apprentices to work for them. There was also a pool of labour available for work from the ranks of the Newly Arrived. The rate of hire for labourers then being rather cheap, varying between two pence and four pence per day in the villages, many wealthy Liberated Africans could therefore afford to employ a number of labourers, with good profit to themselves. These hired Recaptives were employed in farming, timber work, lime-burning and as hawkers. The Akoos, the common name given to Yoruba Recaptives,who were nicknamed " The Jews of Africa", had many Liberated African apprentices in their employ as hawkers.[1] A Liberated African hawker or petty trader at the end of a day's marketting would be satisfied if he gained four pence or six pence, which sum was supposed to have been adequate to provide for all his needs.[2]

This fairly well-to-do class of Liberated Africans enjoyed by far a higher standard of living than the generality of their less favoured brethren who were mainly labourers, and whose worldly possessions consisted of a few calabashes, a wooden pestle and motar, a block of wood for his seat, a piece of cotton cloth for both clothing and covering at night,and occasionally a plot of land on which to rear his fowls and pigs.[3]

1 Butt's Final Report on the prospects of Immigration into the West Indies. S.O.S Desp. 13-3-45; 18-10-44.
2 Guppy's Report on Emigration from Sierra Leone
3 S.O.S.Despatch 18-10-44.

While it might be true to say that two pence or three pence a day per head, was an adequate sum for the maintenance of this poor class of Recaptives, the standard of living of the well-to-do Liberated Africans was surely above a three pence daily expenditure. Moreover, it can hardly be accepted that the objective standard of living of a community can be reasonably assessed by merely considering the standard of living of the poorest class. The British Government, on which the support of the Recaptives fell, was during the early 19th. century forced to keep the size of its colonial expenses to the minimum. The revolt of the American Colonies at the end of the 18th. century had caused Britain to recoil a little from colonial entanglement; the War with France ,1793-1815; that with the United States 1812-13, had all swelled the British National Debt,from which Britain was not to recover in a few years. It was not therefore expedient for Britain to lavish money on her remaining colonies,especially so, on those in West Africa which up to about the middle of the 19th. century,Britain had not yet decided whether to retain or to release, as was revealed by the 1865 Parliamentary Committee which advised a withdrawal of British interests from West Africa, with the exception of Sierra Leone. Moreover, a period of slump followed the peace of 1815 during which unemployment was rife; wages dropped while prices rose and at the sametime there was an increase in taxation in Britain. Under these circumstances, Britain could barely support her colonies. The daily allowance of three pence per head granted to Liberated Africans was about as much as

Britain could spare for the upkeep of the Recaptives. Whether that daily allowance was adequate or not was a secondary matter. Mr. R.G. Butt in his final report on the prospects of immigration into the West Indies confessed that the Liberated African children in Government schools, who were fed at the rate of one and a quarter penny to penny half penny,per head per day, were undernourished. Butt wrote thus:

> " It appeared to me that the food they received was not sufficiently nuitritious, nor do I think this sum adequate to feed them properly." [1]

Just as children were bein g inadequately provided for so also were the adults. That the Liberated Africans were able to survive on an allowance of three pence daily was due to the fact that they subsidized the Government allowance with whatever earnings their own exertions could yield them.

The living condition of the Liberated African varied with the amount of prosperity they had already acquired. Those most recently landed occupied mud houses and small portions of ground in the neighbourhood of one or the other of the villages. Each hut was built in the form of a square shed, supported by a frame work that rested on eight or twelve poles,interlaid with dry grass or twigs and plastered with mud. The roof was thatched with dry boughs. With the assistance of their comrades, the Liberated Africans took between a few days to a month to complete the construction of their huts.[2] These Newly Arrived Liberated Africans were the least prosperous in the ranks of the Recaptives.

Liberated Africans of a higher grade than the Newly

1 S.O.S.Despatch 13-3-45
2 Sibthorpe's Oration on the Centenary of Slave Abolition

Arrived inhabited farm houses. These were mainly small traders or mechanics and were numerous in number. A much higher class of Liberated Africans than the first two, occupied comfortable frame houses built on stone foundation. Such houses were decorated with a considerable quantity of furniture of European workmanship; books and crockery ware. Houses of this nature were usually provided with a cellar which could be converted into a shop; for the inhabitants of such houses were mainly shopkeepers. The highest grade of Liberated Africans was that which lived in comfortable,two-story-stonee houses, enclosed all round with spacious piazzas. The furniture in these houses bespoke comfort and wealth: mahogany chairs, tables, sofas, and four post bedsteads, pier-glasses, floor-cloths, crockery cupboards and " other articles indicative of domestic comfort,and accumulating wealth." This class of Liberated Africans was the leading merchant class among the Recaptives.[1]

Boards played an important part in the construction of the Liberated African houses. Boards were used to construct frame houses erected on stone foundations and to provide the floor for such houses. Even houses that were entirely stone-worked, had wooden floors as well as shingled roofs, the shingles being made from boards. The size of the shingles varied. Some measured $2\frac{1}{2}$ by $\frac{1}{2}$ feet with a thickness of half an inch. They were placed one over lapping the other, and each was nailed with two pins.[2]

1 S.A.Walker, p.xxxi ff; A.T.Person ,Appendix v.

2 J. G. de Figaniere e Morao. Letters from Freetown Letter iv.

Although the C.M.S. Superintendents had discouraged drumming and dancing among the Recaptives, yet the inclination to sound the drum and to dance to its enticing rhythm was ever present in the Liberated African. Consequently with the termination of C.M.S. supervision of the villages, drumming and dancing were resumed with fresh vigour and festive occasions were always marked by the hilarious sound of tribal drums. Such dancing and drumming usually went on for a whole day and occasionally would even be protracted far into the night. At Waterloo under Mr. Garber, apart from nightly dancing and drumming, the Liberated Africans were accustomed to stay up all night on Saturday evenings, enjoying the tricks of a juggler.[1] Besides dancing to the tune of the drum, the Recaptives also would spend long hours attentively listening to professional story-tellers. This was mainly a nightly pastime and was popular in many of the villages, especially during the dry season; for it was an open air meeting around a bon-fire, with the story teller sitting in the middle of the assembly. The attention of the crowd was retained, not only by the vividness of the narratives and the wit of the story-teller, but also by the cheerful refrains which accompanined many of the stories.[2]

1 C. M. S. Proceedings 1828-29

2 Hear Say

Liberated African tribal traditions and practices were kept alive through their Company meetings. These were supposed to be tribal associations, founded in the villages, where oaths were taken. The C.M.S. at first opposed the Liberated African Companies but later on tried to change the character of the Companies from a pagan association to a Christian fellowship. In many of the villages, the C.M.S. succeeded in effecting this transformation, and in place of the Liberated African Companies were subsequently formed Church Relief Companies, and other Christian Companies or Societies. But even under its pagan character, the Company played a vital role in the life of the villagers; for it not only commanded the respect and loyalty of its members, who were bound by its rules, and thus insistuted a system of discipline in the villages; but it was also used as a benefit society which went to the rescue of needy members.

The Palm-Wine Seller's hut was also a meeting place of drinking parties of Recaptives. At Aberdeen, on the Western side of Freetown, the palm-wine tappers carried on their trade right through the week, irrespective of Sundays; for the tappers held that:

> "If they were to stop making palm wine on Sunday, the very spots of the trees from whence the wine runs out would immediately spoil, and they would scarcely get any wine from the tree during the week, consequently they would suffer a great loss."[1]

1 C.M.S. Proceedings, 1853-54

This argument does not, however, explain the whole point in the palm-wine makers refusal to abstain from working on Sundays. The nature of palm-wine tapping is such that regular visits by the tapper to the tapped tree are necessary to ensure that the wine does not overflow the gourd into which the palm wine drips. If no visit to the tree is made during a whole day it is certain that much loss would come to the tapper. So if not for any other reason the palm wine maker has at least to climb the tree to replace a filled gourd or "Bulley" with an empty one, even on Sundays; and hardly can this be called breaking the Sabbath.

It was not always that the Liberated African was a merry man. At funerals and wakes the Recaptives' demeanour presented a pitiful picture. Funeral houses were packed full with mourning relatives and sympathizing acquaintances. The women mourners would sit weeping on mats with bare heads and stretched out legs, while the male mourners would either be hushing the wailing females or would hang about the house with pensive and forlorn looks. Some tribes kept wakes by singing through the night; others only kept a quiet vigil. As the Liberated Africans took to Christianity, wakes were held like night services, with a lot of praying and singing of Christian hymns. The cost of holding these wakes was often subsidized by the Liberated African Companies.

The C.M.S. with its imposition of a monogamous marriage system on the Liberated Africans many of whom had been reared up in polygamous homes, and many of whom had even before their capture, practised polygany, was introducing a new way of life to the Recaptives. Again, as if by magic, the majority of the Liberated Africans were converted to accept monogamy and to live by it. Respectable male villagers who needed wives applied to their Manager or Superintendent for a permit to get married. If the permit was granted then upon the arrival of a new batch of women Recaptives the men who held marriage licenses would be allowed to visit the African Yard to select their partners. After the selection the couple would then march to St. George's Church in Freetown to be united in Holy Wedlock.[1] There were other times when the selection of wives took place in the villages. In the latter case it was possible to have a period of courtship preceeding the marriage, an important step that was omitted when the choice of partners took place in the African Yard. Then the wedding was almost marriage at first sight and marriage in a hurry. However, the custom of celebrating marriages between persons entirely strangers to each other was periodically put aside as was the case during Governor Temple's administration.[2] On the other hand there was always a shortage of wives as the number of women Recaptives landed was less than the men. Moreover, a

1 13-3-45 S.O.S. Despatch.
2 13-3-45 S.O.S. Despatch.

quick espousal of the women to men reduced the expenditure of the Liberated African Department which had to support the female Liberated Africans until they picked up husbands, during the first three months of their arrival. Dominated, therefore, by a disposal policy, as a means of reducing expenditure, the Liberated African Department was eager to give away wives to men Recaptives who were reluctant to own wives officially, for when married, the Liberated African women no longer got government allowances.

Octavius Temple in a circular letter to the managers of the villages wrote:

> "There are some women in the Yard to be married. You will therefore send to the Office five men of the best character in your district and who are most capable of managing a family, in order that if agreeable to the women, measures may be taken for their marriage. You will consult the officiating Minister as to this selection as his approbation will be necessary."[1] Provided therefore, the would be groom was pronounced fit by both the Manager and the Clergyman and a certificate of his eligibility endorsed by these two gurantors, the marriage went straight ahead.

Many were the evils of such an indiscriminate marriage system. A general lack of affection by the partners characterized a good deal of these marriages. A woman, Sally of Waterloo, confessed that her husband Cocoo was "Not an object of desire to her;" another case was reported in which Nancy of

1 7-7-34 Letter Book

Waterloo was doing services for another man Mamadu, instead of for her husband Mier, because Mamadu, and not Mier was supporting Nancy.[1] There was a case on 6th June 1836 in which Jemmy Davies complained of ill-treatment by her husband who had allowed a certain woman Lucy, a woman whom Mr. Davies "receives in the house," to inflict a wound on Jemmy's head, When Mr. Davies was asked to make his defence, he declared that the case was a domestic matter and should not be heard in Court. Davies was, however fined 6 shillings and 6 pence and the Lady Lucy 2 shillings and 2 pence.[2] Hardly can we say that a Liberated African like John Shower, of Kissy Town who wanted to marry a second wife while his first wife was still alive, fully understood the implications of the institution of Christian Marriage.[3]

The training of Christian mothers did not come to the Liberated Africans until the 1860's when a school was opened at Charlotte for that purpose, although at Waterloo during the 1820's newly arrived women were subject to some instruction in English before they were allowed to marry.[4] Inspite of these shortcomings in the marriage system of the Liberated Africans, 598 weddings were celebrated between 1814 and 1817; and from 1817 to the beginning of 1819, 321 more marriages were

1 12-2-36 Waterloo Case Book
2 Waterloo Case Book
3 5-2-35 Letter Book
4 C.M.S. Proceedings 1862-63: 1821-22

celebrated in the Colony and the majority of these marriages was between Liberated Africans.[1]

A history of the Liberated African Settlements can hardly be complete without an examination of the role of Kissy Hospital - the first abode of many Recaptives as well as the general hospital of sick Liberated Africans. The long passage from the place of capture of the slave ships many of which were seized within the Bights of Benin and Biafra, to Sierra Leone, together with the insanitary conditions that prevailed on board, were a joint cause of the diseased state in which a good number of Recaptives was landed. Liberated Africans landed in a sickly state were sent to the Department's Hospital which at first was located in Freetown by the waterside, then it was removed to Leicester Mountain in 1820, then removed from Leicester on 31st January 1827 to Kissy.[2] When the Liberated African Department was undergoing retrenchment, Kissy Hospital passed from the hands of the Liberated African Department and became a colonial hospital in 1845.[3] At its fully developed stage, Kissy Hospital consisted of the main hospital for the reception of non-infectious sick patients, a Lower Hospital for infectious cases, and a Lunatic section.[4]

The main Hospital consisted of two wards, a male and a female ward. Both these wards were housed in stone buildings,

1 C.M.S. Proceedings 1818-19
2 S.O.S. Despatch 20-10-28
3 S.O.S. Despatch 7-4-45
4 1-6-36 Letter Book: 17-6-29 Letter Book

with shingled roofs, which formerly had been used as a boy's and girl's schools, but later on were fitted out with piazzas in front and with kitchens and out-houses. The ward for infectious cases was also in a separate stone house near the landing place, about one mile from Kissy Village, and surrounded by a dry stone wall forming a square with sides 330 feet each.[1]

When the Leicester Hospital was abolished in 1827, the adult Liberated Africans then under medical treatment were discharged and sent to their respective locations. The sick children were placed with respectable inhabitants and were inspected constantly by the Dressers of the Liberated African Department. In February, 1827 a building at Kissy, near the water side, was taken over for the reception of the sick and distressed Liberated Africans from the villages and for such newly arrived Negroes as required medical treatment. Then the patients at Kissy Hospital were not put on any fixed rates of ration; the medical officer was the sole judge of how much food each patient needed.[2]

The choice of Kissy for the establishment of a hospital for Liberated Africans was not a bad one. At least when compared with the former two locations of the hospital, in Freetown and at Leicester, Kissy seems to have been the most advantageous site. As far as distance was concerned, the

1 Miscellaneous Return Book 1826-38 Page 215

2 S.O.S. Despatch T.Cole's Remarks upon Despatch No.7 of Colonel Denham's Store Accounts for 1st January to 30th June 1827

establishment of the hospital in Freetown would have been the best choice; but then there was great danger of the town being plagued with pestilence from infectious cases. With the hospital being located at Kissy, by the water side, river communication between Freetown and Kissy lightened the burden of transporting sick patients from Freetown to the hospital; a burden which was heavily felt when the hospital was at Leicester.

As was revealed in the Report of the Commission on Kissy Hospital in 1841, the management of the accounts of the hospital was open to fraud. The system that operated in the hospital was to pay a money allowance of two pence a day for each African patient treated upon ordinary diet of rice, stew and tea. The Assistant Colonial Surgeon and the hospital Accountant were responsible for rendering accounts of all articles of provisions and stores for all patients in the hospital, either African or European; for distressed seamen were also treated at Kissy Hospital. But there was no arrangement whereby the hospital accounts could be checked either by a special Department or by the head of the Liberated African Department: and even if it was implicit that the head of the Liberated African Department should examine the Kissy Hospital Accounts, it was not stated whether his examination was final.[1] Consequently under the management of Colonial

1 11-6-41 S.O.S. Despatch Audit Office to Lords Commissioners of the Treasury

Surgeons who were prone to cheat, the patients were deprived of the full value of their allowances. Dr. William Aitkin was a typical example of surgeons who defrauded patients. Aitkin collected two pence a day for each patient, spent less on their food and kept a large hospital staff, many of whom were doing private work for him.[1]

A contributory cause of the high mortality rate that prevailed at Kissy Hospital was a lack of nutritious food. The three pence or two pence allowance was too meagre to provide the patients with nourishing food. Moreover, it was not certain that the patient would even get all his money's worth. In the Quarterly Report on the state of health of the Liberated African population in March 1830, Dr. Andrew Foulis, who had taken charge of Kissy Hospital on 1st April, 1829, found, among other abuses, that the Hospital attendants were extremely careless; that there was no system in the administration of medicines, diets and cordials; that the entire management of the Hospital was entrusted in the hands of a Surgery man and the Manager who were exacting the highest market prices for every article purchased for the patients.[2] Many a time the hospital was kept in an unhealthy condition with leaky roofs and filthy wards and patients lying on mats spread on the ground, having only pillows stuffed with grass to support their heads; for they

1 C. Fyfe Page 267

2 Miscellaneous Return Book Pages 80-86

had no beds while the hospital was at Kissy.[1] In 1830, Governor Findlay on visiting Kissy reported thus about the state of the Hospital:

> "I must confess I never beheld such a state of misery in my life, no less than one hundred individuals collected together all with ulcers of the most inveterate description, and we found them in such a filthy state, that I found it offensive before I got within ten yards of the house." [2]

Findlay was so in sympathy with the patients, many of whose sores had been neglected by the Village Dressers, and thus had developed into ulcers that "baffled all medical skill", that he ordered the dismissal of the Village Dressers. There were also times when the patients were without clothing.[3]

Again the military duties of the Colonial Surgeon took up so large a part of his time that the actual management of the hospital was often left in the hands of subordinates. When Sir Neil Campbell took over the administration in 1826, he disclosed in a letter to Earl Bathurst that the bulk of the duties at Kissy Hospital was performed, not by the Colonial Surgeon, but by Messrs. W. Brown and Libert. Mr. Brown, a Maroon, was the 'man Surgery/while Mr. Libert was the Medical Assistant.[4] Mr. Brown was formerly employed in the Civil Service of the Colony as Dispenser of medicines. With the removal of the hospital to Kissy, Brown was appointed to take sole charge of the sick:

1 S.L.Duplicate Despatch Boyle's Report 1831: Miscellaneous Return Pages 191-193: 21-3-34 Letter Book.

2 28-8-30 Governor's Despatch to S.O.S.

3 26-7-38 Letter Book. Terry to Governor Doherty

4 8-9-26 Governor's Despatch

a duty for which Brown was, despite his experience, not well qualified. In October 1828, although a surgeon, with a salary of £150, was appointed to take charge of the Hospital, yet, encumbered with military work, he was seldom at the Hospital, let alone in the villages. Mr. T. Cole in disgust of this situation wrote: "It is indeed a matter of serious regret that there is not a medical officer attached solely to the Department."[1]

As a result of such mismanagement there was an exceptionally high morality rate recorded at Kissy Hospital. From 1st January to 31st December 1829, 271 patients died out of 478 admitted.[2] Even when the death rate was reported as improving in 1830, the ratio of dead to discharged patients was approximately one death out of every six discharged patients.[3] Moreover the Medical staff did not appear to have had control over the movement of patients from the Hospital. Under Mr. Jarrett's care the patients at the Lower Hospital used to abscond.[4] In a despatch to Viscount Goderich, Governor Alexander Findlay, in commenting on the straggling propensity of the Recaptives, added that many instances had occured of patients escaping from the Hospital.[5]

1 24-5-30 Letter Book

2 Miscellaneous Return Page 86

3 Abstract of the Number of Liberated Africans admitted in the Kissy Hospital from 1st August to 31st December 1830

4 20-1-40 I. Montgomery to A.O'Connor, Acting Hospital Assistant, Letter Book

5 12-4-32 Governor's Despatch

This propensity for straggling was one of the main causes of the kidnapping of Liberated Africans, a practice that was prevalent in the Colony of Sierra Leone, and that was even helped and abetted by some Liberated Africans.[1] In 1821 Mr. Reffell, the Chief Superintendent of Captured Negroes instructed the village Superintendents to put a check against indiscriminate mobility of the Captured Negroes from one village to another. In future the Captured Negroes were not to be permitted to change their residences.[2] This, however, did not deter the Liberated Africans from wandering about. In 1827, there was such an influx of Liberated Africans into Freetown from the villages that Government ordered the managers to issue certificates to those Liberated Africans who were permitted to leave their settlements. Liberated African Defaulters of this regulation were to be sent to the "House of Correction."[3] A few days confinement in the "House of Correction" did not prove to be a sufficient deterrent to discourage Liberated Africans wandering about; for in 1829 fines of not more than five shillings were levied on harbourers of wandering Recaptives and Liberated Africans who were caught wandering were to be treated as "Rogues and vagabonds."[4] But even this was no permanent remedy for the movement of Liberated Africans from village to village.

1 12-4-32 Governor's Despatch
2 March 1821 Letter Book
3 17-2-27 Letter Book
4 5-10-29 Letter Book

At Hastings, according to the June Returns of population, while 195 villagers could not be accounted for, at the same time there were 147 stranger Liberated Africans who had taken up unofficial residence in the Village.[1]

Liberated Africans who could not thrive on agriculture in the villages sought employment in Freetown where they hired their services as labourers to merchants; for Freetown then provided work for a crowd of unskilled labourers during the early 19th century.[2] A large number of settled Recaptives left their villages for favourable settlements. There was a general tendency for Recaptives who were settled in the Mountain District to move down to the Eastern District where they could either thrive on agriculture or eke out a living in the timber factories. Moreover, because of the inadequacy of the amount of land granted to the Recaptives for farming, it was natural that they should move about in search of new farming areas, if they should prosper through agriculture. At Waterloo, for example, it was customary for the people in Campbell Town to farm on Quia territory provided they paid tribute to the Natives in the 1840's This was made necessary as the amount of suitable farming area around Waterloo had been exhausted.[3] At, Mahara, alone, in the Quia Country, a total number of 1171 Liberated Africans - Acoos Cossos and Pappas, held farms each measuring between one and four

1 Return from Hastings 1st April to 30th June,1831, Letter Book
2 18-10-44 S.O.S. Despatch, Guppy's Report
3 26-6-48-2nd Eastern District Vincent's Letters

acres of land.[1] It was not therefore without good cause that the Liberated Africans in general tended to move about.

Freetown in the early 19th century was a busy centre of trade with the interior. Traders of many tribes came down with their wares to sell in the Colony and in return bought European manufactured goods for sale in their respective sections of the country. Among these Native Traders were the Madingoes, some of whom were handicraftsmen in metals as well as in leather and wood, but the majority of whom were slave dealers who kidnapped Liberated Africans.[2] The frequent ingress and egress of traders coming to, or leaving the Colony by canoes was an open way for kidnappers. With no distinction between a kidnapping canoe and a normal trading canoe, the kidnapper, more often than not was sure to escape detection and capture.

Two Liberated African boys who had been kidnapped, one George Leigh who was kidnapped by a school teacher, Mr. Thomas Cowan of Wilberforce, and the other who was kidnapped by a party of Madingoes, were landed from the Spanish Schooner "Maria de la Conception."[3] Four lads were also rescued from kidnappers who intended to sell them into slavery. They were Sam Peter, an apprentice of Wompay of Leopold Town, who was kidnapped by George Wills, a Disbanded Soldier; James Bruce a boy of 12 years

1 17-5-50 2nd Eastern District Vincent's Letters
2 18-10-44 S.O.S. Despatch
3 5-4-30 Letter Book

living at Soldier Town and Kidnapped by one Bush Adam of Bunce Island; Nancy an apprentice of Lydia Gordon of Kissy was kidnapped by Thomas Shower, a Liberated African Constable of Kissy;and another Nancy of eleven years, a new Recaptive was also kidnapped from her mistress by Charles Davies, a Disbanded Soldier who was trading up Country.[1] Not even adults were exempt from being kidnapped. In 1830, Governor Alexander Findlay addressed a letter to the Chief of Berraka requesting the return of one man, one boy and two girls who had been kidnapped from the Colony. The Chief was to receive 200 bars in recompense for using his influence in restoring the kidnapped people. This was a rather faulty system of awarding recompense, for a witty chief might continue to earn money by condoning kidnapping.[2] In that same year it was revealed that a woman, Liberated African, Betsey, had been kidnapped by Bacchus, a Nova Scotian who then sold the woman in the Town of Medina where Allimama Dalla Mohamodu was Chief.[3]

To check kidnapping by way of the Bullom shores, for instances had occured of Liberated Africans being carried off from the landing and watering places in the day time, a plan was devised whereby four constables were to be appointed from among the Disbanded Soldiers to start checking on the ingress

1 Miscellaneous Return Book 1826-38 Pages 149-150
2 27-11-30 Letter Book
3 7-12-30 Letter Book

and egress of canoes starting from 1st January 1831. Two of the constables were to be stationed along the shore between the eastern side of Granville Brook and the west side of Kissy point. These constables were to make their reports to the sub-manager of Kissy. The other two constables were to be stationed between the eastern side of Kissy Brook and Ro Bump. These were to make reports to the Manager of Wellington. All these constables were to keep a constant day and night watch on canoes landing and leaving; they were to check on their articles of trade and to examine the contents of the canoes when homeward bound. In addition, three public landing places were instituted namely; Kissy Point, Wellington Wharf and Ro Bump Creek. All canoes were to land only in these places.[1] Furthermore, it was made a crime to lurk in the streets of Freetown,"Without any visible means of subsistence." The Madingoes and the Fullahs were notorious for lurking in the streets and then kidnapping Liberated Africans.[2] In spite of these measures, the evil practice of kidnapping was not to be easily surpressed for besides the lure for profit which goaded many citizens to become kidnappers, as the Madingoes could offer as much as £5 for each kidnapped fellow; the apprenticeship system of the Colony proved a favourable institution through which kidnappers could easily and without detection procure their victims.[3]

1 15-12-30 Letter Book; 12-4-32 Governor's Despatches
2 12-4-32 Governor's Despatch
3 Peter Leonard's Records of a Voyage to the Western Coast of Africa: Slave Trading in the Colony of Sierra Leone

During Governor Columbine's administration[1] a number of Liberated Africans who came from tribes in the neighbourhood of the Colony were permitted to return home. In 1816, the British Government in its endeavour to cut down Colonial Expenditure recommended a reduction of the expenses incurred on the Captured Negroes by suggesting "whether it would not be practicable to furnish all Captured Negroes who are natives of any parts of Africa not very distant from His Majesty's possessions, and being desirous of leaving the Colony with liberty and means of returning to their respective countries."[2] From this it is evident that the British Government was amenable to the emigration of Recaptives to their respective homes provided such repatration was safe. But even without Government's approval many Recaptives especially Ossos, of their own accord rejoined their tribe on the Eastern side of Sierra Leone.[3] In the 1840's a large number of Yoruba or Akoo Recaptives formed companies, brought vessels and returned home to Yoruba land, landing at Badagry and Abeokouta.[4] But the period of the Akoo emigration coincided in time with the British scheme of encouraging Liberated Africans to emigrate to the West Indies. Consequently the Akoos were not supported by the British Government in their emigration.[5] Likewise did the British

1 1810-1811
2 3-8-1816 S.O.S. Despatch
3 J.J.Crooks Page 176
4 Proceedings 1842-3
1-5-40 S.O.S. Despatch. Russell to Doherty

Government begin to discourage emigration of Recaptives to parts of Sierra Leone, and thus a tendency to emigrate to the South end and the East of Sierra Leone which had arisen among the Liberated Africans was not allowed to develop.[1]

Lord John Russel was convinced that Liberated African emigration to the West Indies would bring benefits to both the West Indies and to Africa; for not only would such emigration lead to the economic prosperity of the British West Indies, but contact with the West Indies would bring education, and a higher standard of living to the African.[2] Russel was right. But the Liberated Africans who were to bridge the gap between Africa and the West Indies could not see the advantage that would be theirs if they emigrated. Moreover the Liberated Africans were discouraged from emigrating to the West Indies partly through fear and suspicion of what might befall them - for the Recaptives, especially the newly arrived were very sceptical about the conduct of whitemen - and partly also through the machinations of the old Sierra Leone Settlers who frightened the Recaptives with blood-freezing stories.[3] The Settlers would declare to intending emigrants that "they are well fed and taken care of on the passage to the West Indies so as to make their blood rich, that on the ship's arrival they are taken

1 17-6-40 S.O.S. Despatch
2 20-3-41 S.O.S. Despatch
3 18-10-44 S.O.S. Despatch

ashore to a large house where they are hung up by the heels and their throats are cut, the blood being used in colouring the soldiers' coats causing them to be so brave that whenever they make war they are sure to conquer; the heads are cut off to make medicine for high whitemen - which causes these high whitemen to be so very clever."[1] With the abolition of the apprenticeship system in the 1840's the Settlers could no longer obtain cheap labour as before. If a large scale emigration of Liberated Africans was undertaken, the labour market would be further reduced in Freetown. Consequently the settlers were determined to discourage Liberated African emigration. And so also were the merchants of the Colony, and the Missionaries opposed to Liberated African emigration to the West Indies. The Merchants were against emigration as it tended to raise the wages of labourers; and the Missionary Societies, C. M. S. and Weslyan because it deprived them of would be converts to christianity. In the first Mountain District in 1844, although the Superintendent reported to the Acting Governor that none of his boys were willing to emigrate, upon interview with an Emigration Agent, 27 boys and their school-master volunteered as emigrants from Gloucester Village.[2]

In commenting about the failure of Liberated African emigration to the West Indies, Mr. Vincent wrote: "...they were afraid of being sold as slaves and would consequently be

1 23-7-44 R.G. Butt's Report on Emigration. S.O.S. Despatch
2 23-7-44 S.O.S.Despatch; 18-10-44 S.O.S.Despatch

separated from their wives and family and would be compelled to enlist as soldiers..." These were the reasons which prevented the Liberated Africans from emigrating on a large scale to the West Indies. Unfortunately however, Mr. Vincent could not see the point of these fears of the Recaptives which he termed "foolish and ridiculous" and "frivolous excuses."

The feeling of frustration in making too many fresh starts in life was not even considered by Mr. Vincent who attributed the cause of the unwillingness of the Liberated Africans to emigrate to the West Indies to the interference of "evil-disposed individuals" and to the "Natural inherent indolence of the Liberated Africans." Mr. Vincent failed to make allowance for the fact that many Liberated Africans had established themselves and it would have been difficult for them to start a new life in another unknown country. While the newly arrived Recaptives feared that by emigrating they might be resold into slavery, the established Liberated Africans were reluctant to try their fortunes elsewhere.[1]

Moreover, Lieutenant Colonel Campbell revealed to the Secretary of State that emigrants had been induced, through deception to embark for Demerara. The emigrants were told that Lieutenant Campbell had been appointed Governor of Demerara; and moreover the wages paid at Demerara were lower than what was stated at Sierra Leone. As a result of this deception, some 900 Sierra Leone emigrants in Demerara petitioned Governor Campbell to help them return to Sierra Leone or else they would "declare a war against the Island." Incidents like this was sure to have an

1 24-3-48 Vincent's Letter

adverse effect on Liberated African emigration to the West Indies.[1]

One of the conditions for emigration was the possession of a passport valued 2 shillings and 6 pence by each individual emigrant above ten years. This was considered a strain on a people "who can scarcely earn four pence sterling a day."[2] Furthermore a residential qualification of six weeks, at one time, then reduced to four weeks, and later on raised back to six weeks, residence in the Colony, was required of would be emigrants. It was required that a certain proportion of female to male emigrants be satisfied before embarkation: there was to be one female to every three male emigrants. But the women would not emigrate: "They would rather their husbands should go without them."[3]

On the whole, Recaptive emigration to the West Indies was not a great success. The settled families in the Colony would not abandon their new homes to start a fresh life in the West Indies; the newly emancipated were reluctant to embark on another sea travel to an unknown destination and with no sure hope of a prosperous future and moreover the climate of opinion in the Colony discouraged emigration of Liberated Africans. Consequently out of 1,044 slaves landed from six slavers in 1844, only 247 were induced to emigrate.[4]

1 26-3-43 S. O. S. Despatch

2 6-7-42 S. O. S. Despatch

3 12-12-43 S. O. S. Despatch

4 13-3-45 S. O. S. Despatch

C H A P T E R VI

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE LIBERATED AFRICANS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLONY OF SIERRA LEONE.

"The Liberated Africans in general are making rapid progress in their agricultural and commercial pursuits ....They are as fast improving in civilization as the generality of the Maroons are retrograding."[1]

The Liberated Africans by virtue of their large numbers were sure to influence the history of the Colony of Sierra Leone. By 1808, the Nova Scotian Settlers had dwindled away and the Maroons themselves were decreasing in numbers. The steady arrival of the batches of Liberated Africans at this juncture, was a timely reserve to the shrinking population of the Colony. At a time when it was difficult to obtain labour, for neither the Nova Scotians nor the Maroons were inclined to serve as labourers, the Recaptives were ready to provide a large and cheap pool of labour to any employer who desired their services.

As early as 1810 the Liberated Africans had started making their presence felt through their contribution to the development of the Colony for with their assistance the country was assuming a more favourable aspect; about 448 acres of land were under cultivation, half of which had just been cleared within the last thirteen months.

1 5-8-32 F. Campbell to Governor A. Findlay. Letter Book

It was however a pity that not much encouragement was offered to the Liberated Africans in the pursuit of agriculture, on a large scale. Apart from a few individual governors' attempts at boosting up agricultural enterprise among the Liberated Africans, on the whole the government did not seem to have put any premium on agricultural development. Colonel Denham's well meaning scheme of attaching experimental government farms to the various settlements died with him. Colonel Doherty made a fruitless effort to recruit a skilled agricultural instructor; Sir John Jeremie took up the same task which brought Mr. Vincent from Demerara to Sierra Leone.[1] Mr. William Allen, the Quaker's plan of establishing model agricultural townships in some of the healthiest villages was never thoroughly carried out. Apart from Allen Town, no other settlement was established along Mr. Allen's suggested scheme. Indeed not even Allen Town was laid exactly as Mr. Allen had directed. According to Mr. Allen's plan, a huge area was to have been selected, capable of containing 100 farms, each measuring five acres in extent. Each farm was to consist of a cottage and a sowing area. On the five acre farm land was to be sown, on one acre, rice, cassada, cocoa etc for family use; two acres were to be cultivated in crops that would afford subsistence for cows, pigs, goats, etc; and two acres to be planted in

1 19-10-42 Letter Book

cotton and coffee. A plan like this would have met the needs of the Liberated African agriculturists, for it opened an avenue for the sowing of crops like cotton and coffee that had exportable value. Mr. Allen's plan, therefore, if it had been fully executed would have raised the Recaptive above the level of a mere subsistence farmer. Moreover two schools of industry in which arts like shoemaking, spinning, weaving, netting and knitting would be taught, were to be established in the township, one for boys and one for girls.[1]

The Government's indifference towards the development of agriculture came out very clearly in the management of the Waterloo Farm under Mr. Henry Vincent. Although Mr. Vincent had embarked for Sierra Leone with his family since 16th December 1841 to take up employment as agricultural instructor, yet after almost a year had elapsed since Mr. Vincent's arrival in Sierra Leone, the Secretary of State delayed the beginning of work on the Waterloo Farm; for in December 1842, a letter came from Lord Stanley in which the proposal of establishing an Agricultural Model Farm at Waterloo was turned down because of inadequate explanation of the proposed plan, and because of the fear of its likely cost. The total annual cost of the scheme was to have been £300.[2] The actual work on the Waterloo Farm started on

1 11-12-26 S.O.S. Despatch

2 31-12-42 S.O.S. Despatch: 19-10-42 Letter Book

3rd November 1842 with the removal of grass from the farming area. But even then there were not enough implements for the boys to work.[1] Government was prepared to pay a £250 yearly salary for a trained agricultural instructor who was to man the Waterloo Farm where boys were to learn agriculture even though there were no tools for the learners.[2]

But this was not all. Even when the Model Farm had been set going, its pupils were liable to be drafted as emigrants for the West Indies. On 22nd August 1843, nine months from the opening of the school, 37 boys out of a total of 60 on roll left for Jamaica.[3] A few days later, 15 more of the Model Farm boys who could provide for themselves were located. Thus the Farm was left with only 8 boys. It was hoped that vacancies could be filled with fresh arrivals from Gloucester or Kent. But even these would have to be located on attaining the age of 12 years. Consequently, by 25th June 1844 all the boys with the exception of seven small boys had left the Model Farm.[4] And what was more in compliance with the Secretary of State's orders for reduction in the Liberated African Department's establishment, Mr. Henry Vincent was to have been one of four managers who were to be dismissed at the end of June 1844.[5] Vincent, however, was not dismissed from office, but the mere suggestion of his dismissal

1 2nd Eastern District Memorandum of Daily Labour by Boys at Waterloo Government Farm Letter Book; 19-10-42 Letter Book

2 24-6-41 S. O. S. Despatch

3 31-12-42 S. O. S. Despatch: 28-8-43 Letter Book

4 28-8-43 Letter Book

5 17-6-44 Letter Book

showed that the Government did not put a premium on the necessity of affording agricultural instruction to the Liberated Africans. Vincent who had been brought into Sierra Leone mainly as an agricultural instructor, waisted a few years in nursing an agricultural school which never attained maturity, and then spent the rest of his life in Sierra Leone, serving as a Manager, first of a village, and then of a whole district. What a change of profession! It was therefore no fault of the Liberated Africans that they did not embark on agricultural work on a large scale; for not only was the quantity of land given them inadequate and in many instances, unsuitable for plantation work, but also they were not provided with the rudiments of agricultural training; besides, the tools provided them could only be used in subsistence farming.

Inspite of the Liberated African's handicap in agriculture, the bulk of the food-stuff on which the Colony depended was raised in the Liberated African Settlements. By 1832, the villages had so increased their agricultural out-put, that the Colony was then almost self-contained as far as agriculture was concerned; for the Villages through their increased agricultural production, were able to avert a possible famine during the later part of the 1831 rainy season, when the Colony was cut off trade with the neighbouring tribes as a result of wars involving the Sherbros, Soosoos and other native tribes adjacent to the Colony.[1]

1 8-3-32 Letter Book

The industry of the Liberated Africans was not only shown in agriculture, but was also amply exemplified in commercial enterprise. By 1832 many Liberated Africans had bought canoes to trade with the adjacent towns situated within reach of navigable rivers.[1] In a despatch to Lord Viscount Goderich in 1833, it was stated that a large scale fishing scheme had started in the Western District, by which fishermen went out for a week and returned with their catches, which when dried, were sold in the inland villages. These fishermen also exchanged their fish with the Natives of the nearby villages for gum, copal, wax, honey, rice and other articles.[2] By the 1850's Liberated African traders had started to penetrate into the interior of Sierra Leone; for in 1852 it was reported that John Roling, an Akroo trader in the Sherbro for many years was murdered while leaving from the town of Bongbui, in the Bagroo River in a canoe loaded with rice. This murder was supposed to have been committed by the Sissi Camby people who were ravaging the Sherbro area. About the same time there was also another Akroo, Joseph B. Pratt, a tailor by trade, resident in Bonthe who traded with the natives in the Sherbro area.

From the various returns of the number of persons employed in each distinct kind of labour in the Liberated African villages within the period 1828 to 1838 the number of Agriculturists was always, except in one case, at least twice ⟨of the number⟩ labourers and about five times the number of Mechanic

1 8-3-32 Letter Book
2 15-5-33 Letter Book

About a quarter of the Liberated African population therefore consisted of labourers.

That the settled Liberated Africans were able to prosper so rapidly was due to the fact that such a large and cheap labour force was at their disposal.

But Recaptive labour was not only available to Liberated Africans it was an open market in which any enterprising individual/company could have a bid. Merchants of the Colony of Sierra Leone, both European and African drew their team of labourers from this pool.

Messrs Charles Heddle, I. P. Kidd, John M'Cormack, Stephen Gabbidon, to name a few merchants, offered employment to Liberated African labourers in their timber factories; and so also did companies like Macauley and Babington, Oldfield and Burnett, Jolly and Company, Wyse and Company, Henry Weston and Company, provide employment for Recaptive labourers.[1]

Liberated African Mechanics and craftsmen excelled themselves in building programmes of the Colony. Stone houses were skilfully erected by stone masons using ball stones and white lime for mortar.

Carpenters and Sawyers found employment both in housing and ship-building programmes, as well as in timber work generally.

By 1832, timber work which had been confined to the Eastern District was now shared by the Western District as well.[2]

1 4-5-51 S.O.S. Despatch; 22-10-29 Government Despatch to S.O.S. 11-9-55 S.O.S. Despatch Report on the Sierra Leone Factories.

2 8-3-32 No.9 Government's Despatch.

Sawyers who desired to cut down timber in the Western District but were not members of that District were to pay taxes at the following rate:- for every 100 feet of board scanthling cut Government was to get 10 for every 10 bundle of Shingles one was to go to Government; for every 10 oars made Government was to receive one; and Government was to get five shillings tonnage on each canoe constructed.[1] In 1836 the people of Tombo were charged a 19% advalorum duty, payable in kind for /of the making/canoes, oars, shingles etc.[2]

By the 1840's there was such a crowd of timber fellers that the Government had to regulate timber cutting.[3] At the same time timber was getting so scarce in the Eastern District that the Sawyers of the Second Eastern District petitioned the Government through Mr. Vincent, the manager, that they be relieved of the 5% duty on timber; instead the Sawyers preferred to pay compensation to Government by working on the roads.[4]

In the 1850's Government further regulated timber felling by requiring Sawyers and Shinglemakers to obtain licences.[5] In much of this timber work Liberated African labour was utilized

Education and Christianity were the twin pillers on which the cultural life of the Colony of Sierra Leone in the 19th century was built. One's standard of living and one's degree of civilization were judged in the light of one's affiliation or non-alignment with Christian Education. Because of their

1 3-11-32 Letter Book
2 5-8-36 Letter Book
3 5-12-47 Second Eastern District Letter Book
4 2-5-43 Second Eastern District Letter Book
5 16-2-56; 1-4-56: 9-4-56 Waterloo Letter Book

prior contact with Western Civilization the Settler Groups had come to imbibe a culture, which although it was foreign yet because it was the culture of their former masters, they accepted as the hall-mark of a civilized life. Of this Western Culture, Christian Education was the essence. At first the Settlers had spited the Liberated Africans because of their complete lack of this civilizing element. But gradually by association and through the work of the C. M. S., the Liberated Africans acquired both Christianity and education, thereby bridging one big social gulf that had divided the Settlers from the Recaptives.[1]

In the process of Liberated African enlightenment the Church played a vital role. It provided simultaneously both education and Christianity to the Recaptives. Moreover, through the Christian Institution, promising Recaptives were given an opportunity for training as leaders not only of their own Liberated African Communities in Sierra Leone, but also as leaders who would propagate Christianity and Western Civilization to their respective Country people. This was to have been the role of the Liberated African as was foreseen by Governor Charles MacCarthy and MacCarthy's prophecy came true. It was with the help of Liberated Africans that the Bible was translated into the Native Languages, the basis of missionary work among native tribes. For example Neu Sukoh, the Chief of Yongoroo was extremely delighted to hear the Book of Genesis

1 Religious Affiliations in Freetown Sierra Leone

read to him in Timmanee and this was the prelude to the establishment of a C. M. S. Station in the Timmanee Country.[1] Again the establishment of the Yoruba Mission was facilitated by the leading part played by Liberated Africans like Adjai Crowther, who not only compiled a Grammar and Vocabulary of the Yoruba Language, but was also one of the leading pioneers of the Niger Expedition of 1841; and also Simon Jones, another Liberated African who accompanied the Expedition and who so impressed the King of the Ibos by his preaching that he was requested to remain in Iboland to teach the Christian Message. Indeed, but for the love which the Liberated Africans had for their countrymen, and the willingness with which they were prepared to return to their country, it is doubtful whether a Yoruba Mission would have been established in the 1840's. The Liberated African was to be the disciple of Christ to his Countrymen; for the Niger Expedition of 1841 had revealed, by the high mortality rate among its European pioneers that whatever work that was to be performed in the interior of Africa, cannot be done by Europeans.[2] Thus from the scum of the earth which they were originally described as, the Liberated Africans emerged within half a century as the civilizing agency of West Africa; they had acquired the ways of the Settlers through education and the acceptance of Christianity and their exertions had won them economic freedom.

1 C. M. S. Proceedings 1840-41

2 The Story of a Mission Page 80 ff

APPENDIX

A RETURN OF THE NO. OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN EACH DISTINCT KIND OF LABOUR IN THE DIFFERENT LIBERATED AFRICAN VILLAGES

Period	Agricul-turists	Labourers	Mechanics	Total	Return of No. of Acres of Land In Cultivation
1st June - 31st Dec.1828	4551	1620	483	6294	24,818
1st July - 31st Dec.1829	4997	2244	532	7773	27,003
1st July - 31st Dec.1830	4179	2355	1109	8533	29,578
1st July - 31st Dec.1831	5032	2308	1331	8671	32,588¾
1st July - 31st Dec.1832	5380	1528	916	7824	31,630
1st July - 31st Dec.1833	4525	1733	1159	7417	30,912
1st Jan. - 30th June 1834	5391	1460	785	7636	33,282
1st July - 31st Dec.1834	5158	1572	1201	7931	30,766
1st July - 31st Dec.1835	4768	2557	664	7989	31,507
1st Jan. - 30th June 1838	5074	2062	701	7837	16,492½

A P P E N D I X

LIBERATED AFRICAN MARRIAGE LICENSE

NAME	BACHELOR OR WIDOWER	TRADE	RESIDENCE		REMARKS
			VILLAGE	LOT	

"I do hereby certify that the above mentioned individuals are of good character and capable of maintaining a family and I therefore recommend them as desirous of marrying Liberated African Women."

Approved as to Moral
and Religious Character

Minister..... Manager.....

RETURN OF PERSONS REQUIRING MARRIAGE LICENSES
10TH FEBRUARY 1836

JOHN SMITH	BACHELOR	MARY JONES	SPINSTER	REGENT

"I know of no just cause or impediment why the above parties should not be lawfully united in Holy Matrimony."

Manager.....

A P P E N D I X

EMANCIPATORY DECLARATION

These are to certify to all whom it may concern that..... slaves Natives of Africa seized on board the.....whereof..... was Master and emancipated, in the Court of Vice Admiralty established in this Colony (in the British and....Court of Mixed Commission established in the Colony, were received by me on the..... from the said court to be dealt with according to, the Acts of the Abolition of the Slave Trade) to the existing Treaties between His Britanic Majesty and His Most faithful Majesty the King of..... And further that the extract from the Register hereunto annexed contains the names and descriptions of the said Natives of Africa.

APPENDIX

MEDICAL STAFF 1ST JUNE 1830 AND SALARY

NAME	WORK	SALARY £: S: D.
A. Foulis	Assistant Surgeon	150: 0: 0d.
William Brown	Surgeon Men Kissy	100: 0: 0d.
Thomas Young	Dresser Kissy	12: 10: 0d.
Mama O'Conner	Matron Kissy	18: 0: 0d.
Maria	Worker Kissy	6: 0: 0d.
Nancy	Worker Kissy	6: 0: 0d.
James Osola	Word Keeper Kissy	7: 16: 0d.
Francois	Cook Kissy	11: 8: 0d.
Maria Jem	Nurse	5: 8: 0d.
James Nicol	Dresser York	24: 0: 0d.
Pedro Joaquin	Dresser Kent	30: 0: 0d.
William Jones	Dresser Banana	12: 10: 0d.
James Chambers	Dresser Hastings	12: 10: 0d.
Thomas Walker	Dresser Waterloo	12: 10: 0d.

A P P E N D I X

The whole of the Newly Arrived Liberated Africans (Males) above 14 were supplied with the following on their being located

1.	Mat	£: 0: 9d.
1.	Blanket	-: 10: 0d.
1.	Duck Frock	-: 5: 0d.
2.	Duck Kilts	-: 2: 9d.
1.	Tin Plate or Wooden Bowl	-: 1: 3d.
1.	Iron Spoon	-: 0: 10d.
1.	Tin Cup	-: 0: 10d.
1.	Camp Kettle & one Iron Pot for every five men	-: 1: 2¼.
1.	Bill Hook	-: 1: 6d.
1.	Hoe	-: 1: 6d.
1.	Cutlass	-: 1: 3d.
1.	Felling Axe	-: 3: 0d.
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£1: 9: 10¼d.

Alterations in the Staff of the Liberated African Department and New Arrangements since 1st April,1829 (Governor's Despatches)

APPENDIX

REGULATIONS FOR THE MARKET OF THE DIFFERENT LIBERATED AFRICAN VILLAGES ORDERED BY HIS HONOUR ACTING GOVERNOR FRASER ON 23RD MARCH 1830

Inhabitants who constantly attend to pay 2 pence per week: those casually one penny per day.

Strangers to pay as follows:-

For a Bully of Rice, Ground Nuts, Oranges stc ..	one penny
For a Dollar worth of Fowls	one penny
For a Bunch of Platains - if large	half penny
For a Bunch of Bananas - if large	half penny
For a Bully of Palm Oil	one penny

For Cattle slaughtered and sold by the inhabitants the following to be paid:

Oxen	six pence
Sheep, Goats, Hogs	three pence

Live Stock sold by strangers, whether Bullocks, Horned Sheep Goat or Hog .. .. one penny For every dollar received.

The Butcher's Fee:

Oxen	1s. 6d. each
Sheep, Goat, Hog	nine pence each

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